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ABSTRACT

The public library board of trustees is an example of the great democratic tradition of giving authority for the operation of public agencies to members of the general public. The public library board is legally responsible for overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the public library. The board hires the library's administrator, plans the library's services, approves the library's policies, decides how much the library will request for its budget, and in Idaho, has exclusive control of the expenditure of library funds. This manual gives public library trustees a basic understanding of their duties and powers. Each section contains a brief self-assessment exercise useful for board members to assess themselves and their board. The manual is divided into 10 sections: (1) Introduction; (2) The Trustee and the Law; (3) The Board Meeting; (4) Budgeting and Financial Management; (5) The Trustee and Policy Making; (6) The Trustee and Library Planning; (7) The Trustee, Director and Staff; (8) Trustees and Automation; (9) Trustees and Community Relations; and (10) Appendices. Twenty-one appendices include a list of resources to obtain assistance, the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom To Read (a statement by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of American Publishers), and ALA interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights. (Author/SWC)

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Idaho Library Trustee Manual

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Idaho Library Trustee Manual

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A Great Democratic Tradition

One of the most democratic of American political traditions is to give the legal authority for the operation of public agencies to boards made up of members of the general public. City councils, county commissions, and school boards are perhaps the most obvious examples of such boards, but there are many others, including the board of trustees for the public library. Thus, the public library board is not just another social organization. It is an example of a great democratic tradition.

Basic Responsibilities

The public library board is legally responsible for overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the public library. Board members, operating as a group, hire the library's administrator, plan the library's services, and approve the library's policies. They decide how much the library will request for its budget, and they have, according to Idaho State law, exclusive control of the expenditure of library funds.

Being a library board member, then, is not just an honor. It is a responsibility. Good library board members do not just attend board meetings. They also take the time to study the role of the library trustee. They are aware of the laws that govern public agencies in general and the public library in particular. They learn what is going on in the library community by participating in state library organizations and attending continuing education opportunities in their area. They have read and understood the by-laws of their board and the policies of their library. They talk to members of the community about the library, and they bring this input with them to board meetings.

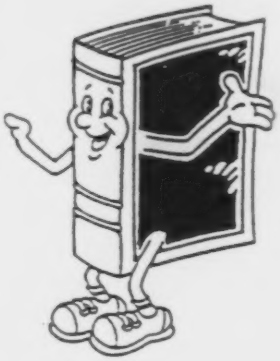
Manual Purpose

The purpose of the Idaho Public Library Trustee Manual is to the give trustees a basic understanding of their duties and powers. Unlike many handbooks of this kind, it will be a growing document. Trustees receive a basic handbook in loose-leaf notebook form that gives an outline of their duties as public library board members. From time to time, the State Library will send additions or revisions to be included in the manual. We hope when this material is received, trustees will set aside some time at their next board meeting to discuss it, and to see how the information can be applied to their library. All materials can be easily added to the original notebook.

How to use this manual

Each section is also provided with a brief self-assessment exercise. Each year it will be useful for board members to assess themselves and their board by using these exercises. Some of the exercise questions will test the board members general knowledge; others will ask trustees to assess their knowledge of their own local situation.

In addition, there are places in the notebook for local information. At the tab marked "Ordinance/Order" city library trustees should place the city ordinance that established the library. District trustees should place a copy of the order of the county commissioners which was the basis for the election which established the district. There is also a tab for the local library board by-laws, for the library's long-range plan, for its policy manual, its current budget, and it minutes for the last year. If the library board does not have written information to fit into each of these categories, this is an indication it needs help to develop the missing items.



It is our hope that as board members retire from the board, they will pass their manual on to the board member who will take their place. Not only will this provide the new board member with vital information about the library, but it will also stress the importance of acquiring and keeping such information.

Help!! Where?

The library board of trustees has a tremendous responsibility. But there are others who can help. The Idaho State Library provides in-depth consulting service upon request. In addition a continuing education event for trustees is held annually. The Idaho Library Association (ILA) also has a Trustee Division, and annually at the ILA convention, an educational activity for trustees is held. Addresses and telephone numbers for these agencies are located in the Help Appendix of the Guide.

The public library is perhaps the most democratic of all institutions. It is open to all, but no one is forced to use it. The principle that lies behind it is that given an opportunity, people can learn on their own, and they can decide for themselves. As a public library trustee, you have the vital role of bringing this democratic principle to life.

General Information

The issues and decisions involved in the administration of the modern public library are varied and complex. Trusteeship is not an honorary position. It is a working relationship with the community, library staff, and fellow trustees.

Trustees must devote a great deal of **time** and express a high level of **interest** to fulfill their duties. **Commitment** is the primary qualification for those who serve on the board.

Effective boards consist of informed, dedicated citizens who represent a cross-section of the community. There is a direct correlation between the quality of library service a community offers and the knowledge, capability, and enthusiasm of its board members.

Effective trustees are citizens who have:

1. Readiness to devote time and effort to learning about the library in addition to the duties, responsibilities, and authority of trusteeship.
2. Recognition of the importance of the library as a center of information, culture, recreation, and lifelong learning in the community.
3. Willingness to become knowledgeable in areas of librarianship that include standards, trends, and new developments.
4. Rapport with the community, including a concerned awareness of diverse social and economical conditions, needs, and interests of all segments of the public.
5. Position of leadership in the community, government, business, education, finance, law, or related fields.
6. Initiative and ability to plan creatively, to establish policies for effective operation of the library, and to withstand pressures and prejudices when providing impartial service to the patrons.
7. Skill in board management, an open mind, intellectual curiosity, respect for the opinions of others, and the ability to work cooperatively with others.
8. Sound judgement, a sense of fiscal responsibility, legal understanding, and political awareness.

9. Verbal and written communication skills, the ability to relate to the public, and the availability to represent the library at public functions and meetings.

10. Willingness to participate with local, state, and national library leaders and trustees to improve library service on all levels.

What does a trustee do?

Your job is:

To Know

- Type and organization of your library board
- Your duties and responsibilities
- Library services and resources available
- Local government - structure, people, and operations
- Information needs and interests of the community
- How to work effectively in a group
- The State Library
- National library trends, standards, and developments
- The lingo - don't hesitate to ask

To Attend

- Every board meeting and assigned committee meeting
- Idaho Library Association, Pacific Northwest Library Association, and American Library Association meetings whenever possible
- Other area and local meetings and workshops

To Plan

- Policies of the library
- Future growth and priorities of the library
- Active community awareness programs
- Orientation for new board members

To Support

- Your librarian and library
- Your local governing body
- The community and citizens you represent
- Local, state, and federal legislation

To Act

- To articulate your library's needs
- To seek funding
- To promote your library whenever called upon by the librarian, city council, or private citizens
- To develop good personal relations with local, state, and federal representatives of government
- To make yourself, your board, and your library visible in the community

To Remember

- The library board acts only as a whole
- The library board must authorize you to act as an individual in behalf of the library
- The board does not run the operations of the library

Trustee Orientation

Welcome the new members of the board by providing the information they need to feel comfortable with the new job and to begin work. Like any new "employee," trustees will be more productive if they know how the organization functions and what is expected of them.

Plan a step-by-step orientation program. Let the new trustee know how the introductory activities will be handled. Responsibility for planning and implementing the orientation is shared by the board chairperson, board members, and the library director.

The specifics will obviously vary with the style of the board and the size or type of library. However, the importance of a written orientation plan cannot be overemphasized.

A. Preorientation

Whenever possible, sessions should begin immediately before the first board meeting. Schedule time to allow the new trustee to ask questions, to develop a rapport with you, and to obtain background information. New trustees should:

B. Meet with the library director to learn how the library is:

- organized and governed
- funded and budgeted
- operated day-to-day
- serving the needs of the community
- linked to other resources and groups related to board of trustees

C. Meet with trustee representatives to learn about the board:

- type of board, (city or district) officers and committees
- meeting location, schedule and operation
- responsibilities and expectations
- goals, long-range plans and projects in progress
- accomplishments
- relationship to librarian

D. Tour library (or libraries) and meet staff members

E. Orientation Kit and Notebook

A new trustee needs local information to review and consult. A three-ring binder is a very serviceable format for the board's notebook of continuing activities and reports.

The contents should include:

- List of board members, names, addresses and phone numbers
- By-laws of the board
- Organizational chart for library including staff levels, pay scales
- Staff lists, titles, responsibilities, location
- Policies of library and board concerning personnel, book selection, collection development, meeting room use, etc.
- Long-range development plans
- Most recent library annual report, with prior years for comparison
- Minutes of previous board meeting(s)
- Current budget and financial reports
- History of the library and its current goals and objectives
- Local laws, charter and contracts pertaining to library
- Community analyses such as census figures, economic and occupational trends

F. Introductory Board Meeting

Hold the regular board meeting at a slower pace then usual so that newcomers can ask questions and follow the business. Consider having experienced board members briefly recap activities and accomplishments of the past year.

Adjourn the meeting, then spend time reviewing with new trustee and ask for opinions and observations.

On-going discussions and informal sessions can be a valuable supplement to the on-the-job training which follows orientation. Pay special attention to your new members.

Our Board .

		Yes	No
1.	Does our board meet regularly each month?	☐	☐
2.	Does each trustee attend board meetings regularly?	☐	☐
3.	Is there active participation by each member?	☐	☐
4.	Does the board provide planned orientation for new members and know the length of term of each individual members?	☐	☐
5.	Have by-laws been adopted?	☐	☐
6.	Has our board prepared a long-range plan for the library development?	☐	☐
7.	Are the members informed on provisions in charter, ordinances, and/or state laws applicable to the library?	☐	☐
8.	Does our board function as a policy-making body, delegating administration to the librarian and staff?	☐	☐
9.	Are there written policies on personnel, book selection, gifts, hours open, and extension of library services?	☐	☐
10.	Is our library director included in board meetings, his or her report received at each meeting, and his or her recommendations considered in making decisions?	☐	☐
11.	Does our board report regularly to the appropriating body and to the community, with statistical, financial, and human interest facts?	☐	☐
12.	Does the board have a relaxed, cooperative relationship with the city or county commission?	☐	☐

Yes	No		
			Our Finances
☐	☐	1.	Is our budget prepared annually in time to submit it to the appropriating body when it begins budget considerations?
☐	☐	2.	Is our budget estimate based on current year's expenditures, plus cost changes, expanded service, standards of good service, and our library's objectives?
☐	☐	3.	Does our board take advantage of economies possible through cooperation with other libraries?
☐	☐	4.	Do the board members go before the appropriating body with the librarian and present the budget estimate, with a carefully prepared "justification" and graphic aids?
☐	☐	5.	Is the support of individuals and groups enlisted in securing approval of the budget request?
☐	☐	6.	Are other possible sources of income explored and utilized fully, e.g., gifts, endowments, grants?
☐	☐	7.	Is a systematic accounting of funds maintained by the librarian?
			Our Building
☐	☐	1.	Is our building at street level on a site convenient for the public?
☐	☐	2.	Is its outside appearance inviting and in good repair?
☐	☐	3.	Do we have a book slot or box for return of books when the library is closed?
☐	☐	4.	Does the library have an attractive sign giving name and hours open?
☐	☐	5.	Is its interior appearance inviting, functional and in good repair?
☐	☐	6.	Is reading room space provided for adults, young people, children?
☐	☐	7.	Is suitable and adequate work space for staff provided?
☐	☐	8.	Is our building comfortable as to lighting, heating, and air-conditioning as required by the climate?
☐	☐	9.	Is there an attractive, well-placed, public bulletin board?
☐	☐	10.	Does the building conform to all building and safety codes?
☐	☐	11.	Is the building accessible to people with disabilities?

	Our Staff	Yes	No
1.	Is our library director enthusiastic, efficient and friendly, and does he or she know the community?	☐	☐
2.	Does the staff know that public relations is the job of each member through helpful, friendly and competent service to every patron?	☐	☐
3.	Does staff have the requisite training and experience?	☐	☐
4.	Is it unnecessary for staff to use their own time to carry the work load?	☐	☐
5.	Is sufficient help provided to carry on the work of the library?	☐	☐
6.	Are our salaries comparable to those paid in our community for comparable work, and also to the scale in other libraries of comparable size?	☐	☐
7.	Does our staff have vacation and sick leave with pay, and an opportunity to participate in social security, retirement, and a hospitalization plan?	☐	☐
8.	Does our staff have comfortable working conditions as to light, heat, ventilation, work, and rest rooms?	☐	☐
9.	Is our staff encouraged and helped to get in-service training through paid time and travel expenses to attend professional meetings and workshops and take extension courses in library science?	☐	☐
10.	Does our library subscribe to professional magazines and provide staff members time to read and discuss them?	☐	☐
	Our Books and Materials		
1.	Is there a written collection development policy as to the types of materials which our library procures by purchase and accepts as gifts?	☐	☐
2.	Is our collection classified, labeled, and shelved according to an organized plan?	☐	☐
3.	Does our collection provide for the needs and interests of all ages: adults, young people, and children?	☐	☐

Yes	No	
☐	☐	4. Does our collection for adults and young people include both fiction and non-fiction, with emphasis on informational materials?
☐	☐	5. Are our selections for each age group made from reliable selection aids, e.g., *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Public Library Catalog*, and *Children's Catalog*?
☐	☐	6. Is our acceptance of gifts on the same selection basis as for purchased materials?
☐	☐	7. Does the library director purchase items each month to maintain a regular flow of material?
☐	☐	8. Is our collection kept clean and in good repair?
☐	☐	9. Is the quality of our collection maintained by regular "weeding" of worn-out, unused, and out-of-date books?
☐	☐	10. Has our collection been "weeded" within the past two years?
☐	☐	11. Are materials selected by our library director and staff, and consideration given to requests of patrons?
☐	☐	12. Is there an accurate shelf-list of the collection maintained for use in selection and inventory?
☐	☐	13. Is an accurate record kept of the number of materials, additions, and withdrawals?

Our Library's Services

Yes	No	
☐	☐	1. Have the services offered changed significantly in the past five years?
☐	☐	2. Does our library serve all parts of the community -- geographic, economic, educational, occupational, social, religious, etc.?
☐	☐	3. Does our library have established services that meet the needs of our community?
☐	☐	4. Does our librarian give individual users assistance in finding what they need and in motivating readers of all age groups?
☐	☐	5. Is help given to clubs in program planning?

		Yes	No
6.	Is assistance given to organizations in obtaining materials for program use?	☐	☐
7.	Do we help patrons by keeping borrowing routines simple, maintaining telephone reference service, and having the library open when it is needed, including night and weekend hours?	☐	☐
8.	Are there children's story times and reading programs?	☐	☐
9.	Are there timely exhibits and displays in the library?	☐	☐
10.	Does our library borrow through interlibrary loans to supply informational needs not covered by our collection?	☐	☐
11.	Does our library look for creative methods to provide services to those who can not come to our building?	☐	☐
12.	Do we let our community know of our services through regular and frequent use of newspapers, radio, TV, direct telephone contact, exhibits outside the library, and their publicity?	☐	☐
13.	Are the library's hours in the newspaper every week?	☐	☐
14.	Is there a community-wide observance of National Library Week and Children's Book Week?	☐	☐
15.	Are the monthly and annual reports made the subject of news stories in local papers?	☐	☐
16.	Do we maintain close relations with other libraries of the community, e.g., school libraries, church libraries, etc.?	☐	☐

Our State Relations

		Yes	No
17.	Do we report our statistics regularly and accurately to the State Library as required by law?	☐	☐
18.	Do we make use of the consultant and continuing education services of our State Library?	☐	☐

The Trustee and the Law

Introduction

The tax-supported public library is a legal entity. Many of its roles, functions, and powers have been established by the Idaho statutes. The powers and duties of library board members have also been spelled out by law. Many laws are changed each year. **Current statutes should be checked for the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted.**

The specific laws governing city libraries are found in Idaho Code Section 33-2601 to Section 33-2610. Specific laws relating to district libraries can be found in Sections 33-2701 to 33-2729. School-community library law is found in Sections 33-2737 to 33-2740.

In addition to the laws that deal directly with public libraries, library trustees should also be aware that a number of other laws which affect public agencies also apply to the library. Some of the most important of these laws are:

- Liability of Governmental Entities (Sections 6-902 to 6-904)
- Public Records (Sections 9-337 to 9-348)
- Nepotism and Conflict of Interest (Sections 18-1359 and 59-701 to 59-705)
- Indecency and Obscenity Laws (Sections 18-1517, 18-4101, and 18-4102)
- Accessibility for Persons With Disabilities to Public Buildings (Sections 39-3201 to 39-3210)
- Competitive Bidding for Cities (Section 50-341)
- Public Depository Law (Sections 57-101 to 57-145)
- Open Meeting Law (Sections 67-2341 to 67-2347)
- Levy and Apportionment of Taxes (Section numbers change frequently; contact the State Library for more information)

All trustees should read and understand the specific laws that govern their particular kind of library. In addition, they should be familiar with the more general laws listed above.

Each year the Idaho State Library publishes two versions of the most important laws governing Idaho's public libraries. The basic edition covers the special laws for libraries. The complete edition covers both the library laws and more general laws affecting public agencies. The basic edition is mailed to every public library trustee in the state. One complete edition is sent to each public library.

The basic edition is published with holes punched so it can be kept in this manual. Each year the old edition should be replaced with the new. If you would prefer to have a personal copy of the complete edition, please contact the State Library.

Liability

Can I be sued personally for actions I take as a board member?

While in our litigious society, it appears that anyone can be sued for anything, the Idaho Code provides considerable protection for library board members who are acting within the scope of their assigned duties. This protection resides in IC 6-902 through IC 6-904. **Current statutes should be checked for the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted.**

IC 6-903[b][l] states: "A governmental entity shall provide a defense to its employee and be responsible for any judgment on any claim or civil lawsuit against an employee for money damages arising out of any act or omission within the course and scope of his employment...." IC 6-902 defines "Employee" as "an officer, employee, or servant of a governmental entity, *including elected or appointed officials* [our emphasis]."

In IC 6-903[d], the statute states: "A governmental entity shall not be entitled to contribution or indemnification, or reimbursement for legal fees and expenses from its employee unless a court shall find that the act or omission of the employee was outside the course and scope of his employment or included malice or criminal intent." In other words, if you are sued, the library will also be responsible for paying for your legal fees, in most cases.

Are there exceptions? Yes, IC 6-903[c] states: "The governmental entity may refuse a defense and disavow and refuse to pay any judgment for its employee if it is determined that the act or omission of the employee was not within the scope of his employment or included malice or criminal intent." However, IC 603[e] states: that ". . . it shall be a rebuttable presumption than any act or omission of an employee within the time and at the place of his employment is within the course and scope of his employment and without malice or criminal intent." In other words, if the action or omission for which you are being sued took place at a board meeting or was done at the direction of the board as a whole, it is presumed that you should be defended by the library and that any judgment against you should be paid by the library. In short, in these cases, you are presumed covered, unless someone proves otherwise to the satisfaction of a court. However, if you act outside the course and scope of your legal duties or authority, or with malice or criminal intent, you may be personally liable for your actions, and the library may not be ultimately responsible for paying your legal fees or cost of defense.

A general principle on the power of board members

One of the general principles to remember is that as a board member, you have no official power as an individual. Your power is derived from the board. Idaho Code gives the board as a group the authority to make decisions at board meetings. The Board may make an assignment for an individual member or members to take some action for them. As long as individual board members are acting with this official kind of authority from the board as a whole, they will normally be protected from personal liability. If, however, such authority has not been granted and a board member takes some action, s/he may be held legally responsible for the action, even if s/he claims to have been acting as a board member.

Liability Insurance

Although lawsuits against libraries are very rare, your library should have a plan for dealing with liability issues. IC 6-923 gives cities and library districts the right to purchase liability insurance for themselves and their employees. IC 6-924 sets a minimum requirement for policies of $500,000 for bodily or personal injury, death or property damage or loss as the result of one occurrence or accident, regardless of the number of persons injured or the number of claimants. In other words, if you choose to purchase insurance for your library, this is the minimum amount that you must buy.

Special levies for liability. IC 6-927 allows a library district or city to levy a special property tax to pay for a comprehensive liability plan. IC 6-928 allows a city or district to make a special levy to pay a claim or judgment if the district or city has failed to purchase insurance or adequate insurance to cover the claim or judgment.

Idaho Public Records Law

Current statutes should be checked for the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted.

The Idaho Public Records Law (IC 9-337 through 9-347) gives the public the right to examine and copy most documents that are created by the library itself and by local and state governmental agencies. There are some exceptions, and one of these exceptions is library circulation records.

The Public Records Law has two major impacts on public libraries. On the one hand, it requires public libraries to make its records, with a few exceptions, open to the public. On the other hand, the library is required to protect the confidentiality of library circulation records.

Public Records

According to IC 9-338, "Every person has a right to examine and take a copy of any public record of this state and there is a presumption that all public records in Idaho are open at all reasonable times for inspection except as otherwise expressly provided by statute." This means that most of the administrative and business records of the public library are open to the public and should be made available to them for inspection and copying during regular library hours. Reasonable charges may be made for the copies; these charges cannot exceed the actual cost of the copies to the library. The actual cost does not include labor costs for locating or copying the records.

Records that are open to the public include all minutes, financial records and policies of the board, and most records created or maintained in managing the library. Five important exceptions for libraries include most personnel information [See IC 9-340 (36)], information relating to cost estimates prior to bidding on public projects [See IC 9-340 (7)], records relating to appraisal of real property prior to acquisition [See IC 940 (6)], records of gifts to the library when the donor has placed a limitation that is a condition of the contribution [See IC 9-340 (10)], and library circulation records. [See IC 9-340 (9)].

Library Circulation Records

Records which are exempted from public disclosure are listed in IC 9-340. In subsection 9, the statute exempts "The records of a library which, when examined alone, or examined with other public records, will reveal the identity of the library patron checking out, requesting, or using an item from the library."

Idaho was the 43rd state to adopt library circulation record protection. The law was passed to insure the individual's right to privacy. This means that individuals do not have to disclose what they read, view or listen to. To protect this right of individuals, libraries are given the **statutory duty** not to disclose what materials their patrons check out or use in the library.

The law **requires** a library to keep circulation records confidential, and failure to do so may cause the library to be held liable for damages in a lawsuit. In order to keep circulation records confidential, libraries should adopt policies that protect these records from all public record requests, including those from law enforcement personnel and attorneys. Rights to appeal a the denial of a request are described in IC 9-343 and IC 9-344.

How Should the Library Implement the Public Records Law?

The board should adopt a policy and approve procedures for responding to requests for public records. It should designate those individuals who should respond to requests for public records. The staff should be made aware of the policy and should know the procedures to follow if they receive a request for public records. Circulation records and other records which are exempt from disclosure requirements should be kept separate from records which are open to the public. This separation is required by statute. [See IC 9-341]. It should also state what staff should do if an exempt record is requested.

A model policy follows:

The ____ Library

Policy on Access to Public Records

In conformance with the Idaho Public Records Law (Idaho Code 9-337 through 9-347), the ____ Library Board establishes this policy on access to the Library's public records. The Board of the ____ believes that in a free and democratic society, the people must have access to governmental information. At the same time, the Board also recognizes the right of individual library users to be free to use library materials confidentiality. The Board, therefore, endorses both the spirit and the letter of the Idaho Public Records Law.

Designated Custodians of the Library's Public Records. The designated custodian of the Library's public records is the library director. The director may delegate this responsibility to other staff members in her/his absence. [Note: larger libraries may give this responsibility to another management position.]

Access to Public Records. All records maintained by the Library shall be open to the public for inspection and copying during all hours the library is open, unless the information is specifically exempted from disclosure by law. It is the Library's policy to provide access to and copies of records immediately upon request whenever possible. Employees or board members receiving requests shall not ask why the information is being requested. When necessary, a designated custodian may authorize examination to be done outside of regular library hours.

Exempted Records. The ____ Library will deny requests for any records which are exempted in the Public Records Act (IC Section 9-340). The following exemptions apply to the Library: Most personnel information [See IC 9-340 (36)], information relating to cost estimates prior to bidding on public projects [See IC 9-340 (7)], records relating to appraisal of real property prior to acquisition [See IC 940 (6)], records of gifts to the library when the donor has placed a limitation that is a condition of the contribution [See IC 9-340 (10)], and library circulation records. [See IC 9-340 (9)].

Personnel Information. The employment history, classification, pay grade and step, longevity, gross salary and salary history, status, and work place of any current or former employee are required to be disclosed to any person who requests the information.

All other information relating to an employee or applicant, such as home address social security number, and telephone number, shall not be disclosed to the public without the written consent of the employee, applicant or designated representative. Employees may copy and inspect their own records, except for material used to screen and test for employment.

Library Circulation Records. Library circulation records shall not be disclosed to the public, including the agents of law enforcement agencies or other public agencies. Statistical circulation information that does not identify any particular person may be made public.

After providing identification, a person may inspect his/her own circulation records. Requests to make a correction in circulation records may be made in writing.

Maintenance of Exempted Records. Exempted records and exempted information shall be kept separate from records and information that is accessible to the public.

Procedure for Requesting Public Records.

1. A written request for public records will not be required if the information can be routinely provided by the Library.

2. A request for records shall be granted or denied within three (3) days.

3. If a longer time is required to locate and retrieve the requested records, a written request will be required. The designated custodian will determine whether the request can be granted within three (3) days.

4. All requests shall be filled in whole or in part within ten (10) working days. If no answer is provided within ten (10) working days, the request will be deemed to be denied.

5. **Photocopy fees.** No fee is charged for examining public records. If copies of public records are requested, the Library will charge ____ cents per copy. This is the Library's actual cost for making a copy, and does not include administrative or labor costs for finding the records or making the copies.

6. **Mailing and Faxing Records.** Upon written request, the Library will mail records to the person making the request. The person must provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope large enough to contain the requested records, and any postage cost in excess of $______. The library will provide up to ____ pages by fax, with the understanding that the person requesting the records will pay telecommunication charges in excess of $______. [Note: The library should pay minimal amounts for postage and faxing.]

Denial of Requests.

1. If there is any doubt about whether information should be disclosed, the staff member receiving the request shall immediately direct it to the designated custodian. The custodian shall ask for the request in writing. It is the Library's policy that such a request shall be reviewed by the Library's attorney.

2. If a request for a record is denied in whole and in part, a designated custodian shall notify the person making the request in writing. This notification shall:

   a. state that the library's attorney has reviewed the request.

   b. reference the section of law which exempted these records from public access.

c. give information about the appeals process, which is to institute proceedings in district court.

d. include a certificate of mailing stating: I hereby certify that the original of this letter was deposited in the United States mail, postage prepaid, this ____ day of _________, 199_. Signed by the designated custodian of records.

3. If a request to correct a circulation record is denied, written notification of this denial shall be made in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of the request. The notice of refusal shall state the reasons for the refusal, and provide a statement of the appeals rights, and certificate of mailing as in d. above.

In the case that a request for a record has been denied, the Library shall mark the record so that it will not be purged, and will retain the requested records until the end of the appeal period (180 days) or until there is a decision on the appeal. The record shall not be purged without the approval of a designated custodian of the Library's public records.

Nepotism and Other Conflicts of Interest

Current statutes should be checked for the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted.

Nepotism. Idaho Code Section 18-1359 states that "No public servant shall . . . appoint or vote for the appointment of any person related to him by blood or marriage within the second degree, to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty, when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office, or appoint or furnish employment to any person whose salary, wages, pay or compensation is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office and who is related by blood or marriage within the second degree to any other public servant when such appointment is made on the agreement or promise of such other public servant or any other public servant to appoint or furnish employment to anyone so related to the public servant making or voting for such appointment." The same code section goes on to say: "No person related to a mayor or member of a city council by blood or marriage within the second degree shall be appointed to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty with the mayor's or city council's city when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee or employee is to be paid out of public funds."

What relatives are included within the second degree of relationship? Within the second degree comprises parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers and sisters.

What does this law mean? This law prohibits board members of a city library from hiring any parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister of the mayor or any city council member. In both city and district libraries, because the library director must recommend the hiring of all other library employees (see 33-2608 and 33-2721), it also prohibits the hiring of the library director's parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister. It prohibits any library board member from voting for her/his own parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, brother or sister to be hired as a library employee. It also prohibits library board members from trading votes in order to hire each other's parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers or sisters.

What are the potential penalties for violating the law? IC 18-1360 states the penalty for violating this law can be a fine of up to $1,000 or incarceration in the county jail for up to one year, or both.

Nepotism and Good Management. While IC 18-1359 does not explicitly prohibit the hiring of close relatives of the library board members, this practice can lead to very serious problems. The board member will be prohibited from voting on any issue that might benefit his/her relative. Outside of this prohibition, board members may let their personal relationships interfere with their decision making on the library, and it will put the library director in a very awkward position if s/he has conflict with the related employee. Even if these situations do not occur, the hiring of close relatives can become a very serious public relation problem, if the public begins to believe that the library board is hiring its own relatives, and thereby profiting unduly from their library board membership.

Other Conflicts of Interest. Idaho Code 18-1359[d] prohibits public servants from being an interested party in any contract made by in their official capacity, except in very specific instances, which are listed in 18-1361 and 18-1361A. IC 59-201 prohibits city and district officers, among others, from being "interested" in any contract made by them or the board of which they are members.

Idaho Code Title 59, Chapter 7 covers Ethics in Government. IC 59-703 gives a basic definition of a conflict of interest as "any official action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which would be to the private pecuniary benefit of the person or a member of the person's household, or a business with which the person or a member of the person's household is associated . . . "

IC 59-704 states that: "A public official shall not take any official action or make a formal decision or formal recommendation concerning any matter where he has a conflict of interest and has failed to disclose such conflict as provided in this section." If a board member believes s/he may have a conflict of interest in making any decision as a board member, the following actions should be taken.

District Trustees. As an elected official, the trustee must disclose the nature of the potential conflict of interest prior to taking any action. If the board has rules about how to respond to potential conflicts of interest, the trustee should follow those rules. The trustee may also request to be excused from voting on the issue. If the board does not excuse the board member, she or he will be excused from any civil or criminal liability related to that particular issue. The board may also seek a legal opinion from its attorney on whether a conflict exists and what action to take.

City Trustees. As an appointed official, the board member should prepare a written statement about the potential conflict and present it to the mayor and city council. The city council then may seek a legal opinion from the city attorney. The board member may then act on this legal advice.

Penalty. IC 59-705 states that any public official who knowingly fails to disclose a conflict of interest may be fined up to $500.

Can my Library be Prosecuted for Obscenity?

No. In two different places the Idaho Code specifically exempts public libraries from prosecution for obscenity.

IC 18-1517 states: "In any prosecution for disseminating material harmful to minors, it is an affirmative defense that: (d) The defendant was a bona fide school, college, university, museum or public library, or was acting in his capacity as an employee of such an organization....."

and

IC 18-4102 states: "This act shall not apply to any persons who may possess or distribute obscene matter or participate in conduct otherwise proscribed by this act when such possession, distribution, or conduct occurs: (B) within the scope of bona fide school, college, university, museum or public library activities or within the scope of employment of such an organization....."

Accessibility to Buildings and Services

Check current statutes to get the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted. Both state and federal laws require that buildings and services be made accessible to people with disabilities.

State Statute on Accessible Buildings

Idaho Code Sections 39-3201 through 39-3210 declares it is the intent of the legislature that "public buildings, accommodations, and facilities" be accessible to people with physical disabilities or who are blind.

The law requires buildings constructed after July 1, 1974 be made accessible for people with disabilities. The law states:

> Any new building must meet national standards for accessibility to people who are physically disabled.
>
> For any new building, the city or county must issue a building permit which has been approved either by the administrator for public works of the State of Idaho or the local contracting authority. Such approval will be contingent on the building meeting the national standards. Contact your city or county government to learn more about these procedures.
>
> - Failure to obtain such approval is punishable by a fine of up to $300 per day.
> - New elevators must have braille symbols and raised Arabic numerals on the elevators buttons, as well as braille symbols and raised Arabic numbers on both sides of the door's casings.
> - Signs indicating the existence of special toilet facilities should be placed in the buildings directory and main lobby, and at any entrance specially used by persons with disabilities.
> - Special wheelchair accessible entrances should be indicated by signs at the main entrance, if the main entrance is not accessible to persons with disabilities.
> - Any building that is accessible to persons with disabilities must be marked with the special symbol of accessibility at all of its entrances.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was a major piece of civil rights legislation that made it illegal to discriminate against people with physical, mental or emotional disabilities. It required public agencies such as public libraries to provide services in a manner that would be accessible to those with disabilities. The basic concepts of the ADA are:

> A governmental agency is required to operate each program so that, when viewed in its entirety, the program is readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities
>
> If a program can be made accessible by some other method other than providing architectural access, providing architectural access is not required. (However, if your library chooses not to make itself physically accessible, you will need to be able to demonstrate that people who do not have access to the building can receive substantially the same services as those who can enter the building.)
>
> Program access is not required where the government can show that providing it would result in:

- A fundamental alteration in the program
- Undue financial or administrative burdens. (To show undue financial burden, your library will need to demonstrate that the cost of the accommodation is unreasonable given the library's budget over time. If the complainant can show that an accommodation could have been made if the library had set aside a reasonable amount of funds each year, it is likely that the library will be found in violation of the law.)
- Government agencies were required to complete a self-evaluation with public input by January 26, 1993, to show where changes would be needed in order to make their programs accessible.
- If the self-evaluation found that changes needed to be made in order to achieve accessibility, a transition plan was required. The changes called for in the plan were to be made as soon as practical, but not later than January 26, 1995.
- Remedies for violation of ADA requirements include filing a complaint with the Federal government or private lawsuits or both.

While ADA is often seen as requiring major changes, most accommodations can be made relatively easily and inexpensively. It is also important to think beyond physical accessibility. Accommodating other kinds of disabilities, such as visual or auditory impairments, is also required. In most cases, this will mean something as simple as increasing the type size for library brochures, purchasing videos with closed captioning whenever possible, or tieing into state-wide services for people with disabilities.

Good faith efforts to accommodate people with disabilities will go a long way toward avoiding a confrontation. Showing that money has been set aside to make a building accessible, for example, will help demonstrate that the library is earnestly attempting to become accessible. It is also important for your library to have a plan for making its services accessible. Without a plan and serious implementation efforts, it will be impossible to show you have made a sincere effort to comply with the ADA.

Competitive Bidding

For City Libraries. Competitive bidding requirements for cities are found in IC 50-341. **Current statutes should be checked for the most up-to-date information. Information presented here is general in nature; in specific situations, legal counsel should be consulted.**

At the time of this writing, cities must use the following procedures when making purchases:

> When an expenditure is estimated to be between $5,000 and $25,000, the city must obtain a price quotation from at least three responsible vendors. At least three of the quotes must be sought registered vendors having a significant Idaho economic presence as defined in IC 67-2349.
>
> When the proposed expenditure is estimated to exceed $25,000, the city must go through a formal bidding process, and make the expenditure with the lowest responsible bidder.

- Notice of the bids must be published in the official newspaper of the city at least twice, not less than two weeks apart. The first notice must be published at least two weeks before the bid opening. The notice must clearly explain the project, and further documentation must be available to any interested party.
- Bids must be submitted to the city clerk.
- The city may reject the lowest monetary bid, if it can document that the bid does not meet the specifications of the bid notice.
- The city may reject all bids and re-advertise at its own discretion.
- If there are no bids, the city may make the expenditure with no further bidding requirements.

For Library Districts. State statutes do not provide any specific bidding requirements for library districts. However, the fiduciary duties to taxpayers requires a formal and fair method of awarding contracts to maximize the value to the public. To assure that the library district is not perceived as unfair at the time of a major purchase, the library district board should adopt a policy on how major purchases will be made. For guidance, you may wish to look at the bidding requirements for cities (IC 50-341) as briefly outlined above or the procedures for counties which are found in IC 31-4001 through 31-4013.

Open Meeting Law

All tax-supported public library boards in Idaho are subject to the provisions of Idaho Open Meeting Law. (IC 67-2340 through 67-2347). The law itself states: "It is the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and shall not be conducted in secret." The purpose of this law is to insure that the public has the ability to know how its business is being conducted.

The legal requirements for open meetings, however, should be seen as the minimum requirements for holding meetings that are open to the public. From an administrative and community relations point of view, the more open you can make your meetings, the better it will be for the library. If your board is seen as secretive, people will wonder if there are things that you want to hide. It is best, therefore, to see the provisions of the Open Meeting Law as the "least you can do" to be open to the public.

The Open Meeting Law makes the following provisions:

(1) it requires that all meetings of public agency boards be open to the public, except in a few special circumstances;

(2) it requires that all decisions of a board be made in public;

(3) it requires that meetings be held in places where there is no discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, age, or national origin;

(4) it spells out notice and agenda requirements for meetings;

(5) it indicates what should be in the written minutes of the board;

(6) it states the few special circumstances in which a closed meeting, called an executive session, may be held;

(7) it provides for the penalty for violating the law.

What is a meeting?

As defined by the statute, a meeting is "the convening of a governing body of a public agency to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision." [Our emphasis] By this definition, a meeting would include any occasion when the board makes a decision or works toward a decision. It is the Attorney General's opinion that the law would be applicable at any time a quorum of the board gathers and board business is discussed, with the intent to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision.

What happens if a board violates the open meetings law?

1. Any action taken in a meeting that is found by a court to have failed to meet the provisions of the open meeting law will be declared null and void.

2. Members of the board may be fined for participating in a meeting that was in violation of the open meeting law. First time offenders may be fined up to $150. All subsequent offenses may be punished by fines up to $300.

3. There are also serious community relations problems that occur when a board violates the open meeting law. Newspapers are quick to attack public officials who cut off the flow of information, and the public will resent attempts to do its business in private. This can lead to serious political problems for the library and its board members.

What does "open" mean?

"Open" means that members of the public are allowed to attend the meeting. Although the law does not state it explicitly, it is implied that meetings should be held in public places large enough to allow an audience. Boards should also try to set their meetings at times when the general public can attend. The board does not necessarily have to allow members of the public to speak at its meetings, except in cases where a hearing, such as a budget hearing, is required by law. However, it is wise to build into the meeting agenda a time for public comments.

What kind of notice has to be given?

For Regular Meetings a notice must be given at least five days in advance. This notice must include an agenda. It must be posted at a prominent place at the main library, or if no library exists, at the place where the meeting is to be held. If your board holds regular monthly meetings scheduled in advance for the whole year, notice of these regular meeting dates may be given once a year. However, an agenda for each meeting must be posted at least 48 hours in advance. This "agenda notice" should contain the date, time and place of the meeting, along with the items on the agenda. A good faith effort to place all agenda items on this notice should be made, but additional items may be added before or at the meeting.

For Special Meetings, a 24 hour notice, including an agenda, must be given, unless an emergency exists. An emergency is defined as a situation involving injury or damage to persons or property or immediate financial loss, or the likelihood of injury, damage or loss, that would occur before the notice provisions could be met. The notice for special meetings shall include the name of the library, and the time, date, and place of the meeting. The board secretary shall maintain a list of news media requesting notifications of meetings and shall make a good faith effort to provide advanced notification to them of the time and place of each special meeting.

For Executive Sessions. If an executive session only will be held, a 24 hour notice will be given including an agenda. The notice will state the reason why this meeting will be an executive session, stating the specific provision of the law authorizing the executive session. Again, the board secretary should make a good faith effort to notify interested media.

What should the minutes contain?

Board minutes should contain the following information:

(1) All the members of the governing board present. (If members come in late or leave during the meeting, it should be noted in the minutes when the person arrived or left);
(2) All motions, resolutions, orders, or ordinances proposed and what happened to them;
(3) The results of all votes, and if requested by a board member, the vote of each member by name.

When can a meeting be closed?

The Open Meetings Law spells out specific reasons for going into executive session. They are:

(1) To consider hiring an employee. (It does not apply to replacing an elected official);
(2) To consider the evaluation of an employee, disciplinary action against an employee, or to hear complaints against an employee;
(3) To consider labor or real estate negotiations;
(4) To consider records exempt by law from public inspection;
(5) To consider preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce where the library is in competition with other agencies;
(6) To work with the board's lawyer in cases of litigation or potential litigation.

How is the meeting closed?

The officer presiding at the meeting must declare the reason for going into executive session. It must be one of the reasons stated above and must be placed in the minutes. The board must vote to go into executive session by a two-thirds vote. The vote must be recorded by individual vote.

What can happen in the executive session?

The board may only discuss the issue for which the executive session was called. Minutes must be taken, containing sufficient detail to convey the general tenor of the meeting. **No final action can be taken or final decision made.**

Some Common Questions About the Open Meeting Law

Does the open meeting law prohibit board members from meeting together socially?

No, board members may meet together socially, but board business should not be discussed, especially if a quorum of the board is at the social gathering.

I have a decision that needs to be made. It would be a waste of time to call a special meeting. Can I just call all the board members to get their approval?

No, this "telephone tree" approach to doing business is illegal, since a decision is made, and the "meeting" is not open to the public. Business may be held through a conference call, but at least one place involved in the call must be open to the public with a speaker phone available so members of the public can hear all board members' participation.

Our board members are all driving to a workshop together. It would be a perfect time to get some board business done. Can we discuss board business while we are driving in the car?

No, this could be construed as deliberating toward a decision, and therefore would be prohibited under the Open Meeting Law.

Our board is having a lot of conflict with our library director. Can we tell him/her not to attend our meetings?

No, legally you cannot prohibit any member of the public from attending your meetings, unless you declare an executive session as listed above. In addition, for district libraries, IC 33-2721 states the library director shall act as the secretary of the board, and therefore, s/he must attend board meetings to carry out the duties assigned by law. The section also states "The director shall attend all executive sessions of the board of trustees, except those called to consider the evaluation, dismissal, or disciplining, or to hear complaints or charges against the library director."

It is also very poor management practice to hold board meetings without the library director, because the library director knows more about the day-to-day operation of the library than anyone else, and s/he will be responsible for carrying out any decision the board makes. The exclusion of the library director from board meetings will only make communication between the director and the board worse, and therefore will likely make the situation more difficult.

Our library director just made a big mistake on a project, but generally s/he has done a great job. If we talk about the project at a public meeting it could be very embarrassing to her/him. Can we discuss the project in an executive session?

Unless the discussion is going to be an evaluation of the director or the project falls into the other reasons for holding an executive session, the discussion of the project must be held in an open meeting.

I am a good friend of the library director, but I don't think s/he has been doing a good job. The rest of the board wants to put the director on probation. I agree with them, but I don't want my friend to know I feel that way. Can we vote on this in executive session so I won't lose my friend?

No. According to the open meeting law, there can be no secret ballots, and no final action can be taken in executive session.

Can we hold our board meetings in a member's home?

Nothing in the law prohibits this practice. However, the person hosting the meeting at his or her house must agree to let any member of the public attend the meeting. The house must also be accessible to people with disabilities. It is not good policy to hold public meetings in private homes. Many people feel uncomfortable going to the home of a stranger for a public meeting, and meeting in a home tends to make the library look like the private project of the board members rather than the business of the public.

Trustee Self-Assessment: Library Law

		Yes	No
1.	I have read the state library law that governs my library.	☐	☐
2.	Our board meetings are open to the public.	☐	☐
3.	Our minutes reflect the board members that are present at any time throughout the meeting.	☐	☐
4.	I know to what extent I am personally liable for board actions.	☐	☐
5.	I know how the state law on handicapped accessibility to public buildings affects my library.	☐	☐
6.	I am aware of the restrictions that the state law on nepotism imposes on hiring library board relatives to work for the library.	☐	☐

Introduction

The focal point of the duties and powers of the library board is the board meeting. There are two reasons for this:

1. Individual board members have no legal authority over the library. An individual board member should not, and cannot legally, tell the library staff to change a policy or procedure. When such a change is desired, it must be brought before the whole board.

2. The board only has authority when it makes a group decision in a legally constituted meeting. Discussion of issues by the board in a meeting that does not meet the requirements of the Idaho "open meeting law" (IC 67-2340 to 67-2347) is illegal, and could result in a successful law suit being filed against the board **and** its individual members.

The library board's power, then, only comes into being when its members meet in a legal board meeting.

Two Pitfalls of Board Meetings

Although it is at board meetings where the most important work of the board is accomplished, board meetings are also the place where many good board members lose their enthusiasm for the job. Two different problems may arise:

1. **The Wandering Board:** A board meeting may wander from one topic to another with little or no action being taken, and with many irrelevant side issues being discussed. When board meetings are like this, members come away feeling that their time was wasted. When it occurs meeting after meeting, many good members will consider membership of the board a waste of time.

2. **The Hurried Board:** The second problem is the opposite of the first, but the result is the same. Here the board meeting is dominated by a desire to get done "on time." Important issues that deserve discussion are passed over in a cursory manner because members are not willing to give enough time to the meeting. Again, good board members may feel frustrated in this situation, because important decisions are made with little discussion or reflection.

Additional resources in this part of the guide will include information on how board meetings can be run smoothly and efficiently.

The Board's Business Meetings

Be as productive as possible. Deal only with appropriate issues. Clearly define the difference between the functions of the board and those of the library director.

The board by-laws provide the general structure for your work. Be certain that all members of the board understand their specific roles, assignments and the expectations for all officers and committees.

General Information

- The library director should be present at all board meetings.
- Elect a new chairperson and other officers annually.
- Rotate leadership responsibilities to create a stronger board. Each trustee should have the opportunity to hold office.
- Plan meetings on a regular, annual schedule as listed in the by-laws. Select specific dates, times and places 6 to 12 months in advance.
- Inform chairperson when you are unable to attend and give reason.
- Follow procedures for conducting business meetings as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*. If this seems too formal, the chairperson should devise a specific order of business that maintains an orderly flow for the meetings.
- Keep an archival file of board minutes in the library. Individual board members should retain current minutes in their trustee notebooks.
- Hold working board sessions and committee meetings prior to the formal board meetings where decisions are made. This saves time and provides an opportunity for careful study of the issue.
- Remember! Committees issue recommendations to the board but do not make the decisions. Written committee reports distributed before the board meetings are most effective.
- Follow all the provisions of the Idaho Open Meeting Law.

Guidelines for the Board Chairperson

Before Meetings

- Plan the meeting carefully: when, where, what, why, who?
- Prepare an agenda in advance. Allow adequate time for the items listed.
- Ask staff to mail/distribute the agenda, related reports statistics, etc., at least ten days in advance.
- Ask staff to publish or post public notice of meetings.

Begin Meeting

- Start on time with roll call.
- Introduce visitors and/or new board members.
- Discuss action from previous meeting.
- Review, revise, and order agenda.
- Approve minutes.

During Meeting

- Focus on issues at hand.
- Follow agenda and established order of business as stated in the by-laws.
- Establish action items: who, what, when.

End Meeting

- Review and evaluate meeting progress, decisions, etc.
- Announce next meeting and develop preliminary agenda.
- Adjourn meeting officially.

After Meeting

- Ask staff to mail minutes to all board members.
- Follow-up on action items.
- Begin planning for next meeting.

Agendas

A meeting agenda or order of business is a blueprint of how the meeting is going to be run. The meeting announcement should include the agenda and the issues that will be discussed under each heading.

A typical order of business for a library board is:

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Call to Order. This is the official beginning of the meeting. The chair calls the meeting to order, and a role call of the members is taken. The secretary should report in the minutes the precise starting time for the meeting and the names of the members who were present when the meeting began. (If members arrive or leave during the course of the meeting, this should be noted in the minutes at the point where the member arrived or left.)

Approval of Agenda. Normally this procedure is routine; changing the agenda should not be done lightly, since the posted agenda has informed the public about the issues that will be discussed at the meeting. Changes may be made, however, if a decision has come up after the agenda has been posted, and if a decision must be made before the next scheduled board meeting. The chairperson should ask for any additions or changes to the agenda. If board members wish to add or change an item, they should explain why this item cannot be held until the next board meeting or why the change should be made. This explanation should go into the minutes. Any addition to the agenda should be approved by a majority of the board and the vote recorded by name.

Approval of the Minutes. Members are given an opportunity to review the record of the last meeting and make any changes in the record that is deemed necessary. Records of these changes should be kept. It is not necessary for the secretary to read the minutes out loud. Considerable time can be saved at meetings if the minutes are mailed to the members in advance, and members read them before coming to the meeting. If minutes or other materials are mailed in advance, extra copies should be available at the library and at the board meeting for the public.

Treasurer's Report. The treasurer reports on the financial condition of the library. The report should be in writing, with the treasurer highlighting important changes verbally. The report should include the total income and expenditures for the month and the year, the amount of cash on hand, and a report on where this money is being kept, and at what rate of interest. As with the minutes, meeting time can be saved, and members can be better prepared if the financial report is sent out in advance.

Approval of the Bills. A list of bills should be given to each board member. The actual invoices should be on hand in case there are questions about specific bills. The library director should point out any unusual bills. As with the minutes and the financial reports, the list of bills can be sent out to board members in advance to save meeting time.

Director's Report. Monthly statistics should be presented in writing. Anything unusual that occurred in the library in the previous month that does not require board action should be reported. (If something requires board action it should considered under unfinished or new business.)

Committee Reports. Informational reports by standing or special committees are made at this time. Written reports, mailed in advance, should be prepared if committee reports are long or complicated. If committees are requesting action by the board, the chair should be asked in advance to place these items under either unfinished or new business.

Unfinished Business. These are issues which have been held over from previous meetings. Typically, if an item is listed in either unfinished or new business, it is expected that some kind of action will be taken on it, even if the action is just to put off a decision.

New Business. These are issues that have not been discussed in the past. They are often placed on the agenda at the request of the director or of a board committee.

Adjournment. The adjournment is the official end of the meeting. No library business should be conducted after the meeting has been adjourned. The exact time of adjournment should be stated in the minutes.

Posting the Agenda

To comply with the Idaho Open Meeting Law, notices of the meeting must be posted at the library in advance of the meeting. Boards that do not have a regular meeting date must post a notice of each meeting five days in advance. All boards must post an agenda notice 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Guidelines for Effective, Efficient Meetings

Post and Use Ground Rules

We participate as equals
We discuss openly and honestly
We disagree with grace and tact
We don't hide disagreements or questions
We stick to the agenda
We enjoy each other's company

Timed Agenda

Agree to go beyond time only by motion

Do not read items for "pro forma" approval in meeting

Ask members to read these items in advance of the meeting:

- Minutes
- Bills
- Statistics

Instead, just ask for changes or questions.

Use issue sheets to summarize discussion points

Record on flip charts to focus discussion

Evaluate each meeting

Use plus/change

New Business Issue Number ______

Description of Issue:

Decision To Be Made:

Related Previous Decisions:

Alternatives:

Recommendation:

Taking Minutes

Rule of Thumb: Be Specific

- Name/Title of Board

- Type of Meeting:
    - Executive session
    - Working session
    - Committee
    - Board meeting

- Date, time, place of meeting

- Members present:
  Minutes should show which members are present at any point in the meeting, not just who is present at time of roll call. If a member arrives late or leaves early, this should be noted in the discussion.

- Members absent

- Visitors and guests

- Follow the agenda:
  Items discussed, announcements, and reports
  General description of meeting's content

- Decisions/Actions:
  What, when, who
  Record the number of votes if appropriate
  Put members "on record" as being for or against a decision if they request

- Assignments/Issues and Items:
  To be held for further consideration

- Next meeting:
  Next meeting's date, time, place
  Preliminary agenda items

- Other information (at board's request)

Golden Rules for Board Members

- Leave the actual management of the library to the library director. It is the librarian's responsibility to select books, employ the staff and supervise day-to-day operations.

- After a policy or rule is adopted by the majority vote of the library board, do not criticize or re-voice your opposition publicly.

- Respect confidential information that is protected by the Public Records Act. Do not divulge information regarding future board actions or plans until such action is officially taken.

- Observe any publicity and information policies of the board and library. Do not give information individually but refer requests to the librarian or appropriate representative to interpret policies.

- Treat the library director and staff members in an objective manner. Under no circumstances should you listen to grievances of staff members or treat individual problems on your own. The library director is in charge of the staff and has administrative control up to the point where a grievance is presented to the library board.

- Do not suggest hiring a relative as library employee, or two members of the same family.

- All rules and policies directed to the library director must be approved by a quorum of the board at a regular meeting. Even the chairperson should abide by this rule.

- Do not hold board meetings without the library director.

- Complaints from the public are the library director's responsibility. Continued dissatisfaction and problems should be taken up at the board meeting only if policy revision is necessary or legal ramifications are involved.

- Assume your full responsibility as a board member. If you are unable to attend meetings regularly and complete work delegated to you, resign so that an active member can be appointed.

Energy Drainers

The following situations will drain the energy of your board and hurt your library services:

1. Board meetings that should last two hours never last fewer than four.
2. A board member tries to dominate the meetings.
3. Stories of disagreement between and among trustees find their way repeatedly into the newspapers.
4. One faction of the board assumes that the staff favors another faction.
5. Staff contradicts the director at public meetings.
6. The director waits until a trustee has gone out on a limb before giving the facts that make the point absurd.

Board Vacancies (Cities)

Idaho Code (IC) Section 33-2605 states simply that for city libraries: "All vacancies shall be reported to the proper council within five (5) days by its trustees, and shall be filled in the same manner as appointments are originally made."

When does a vacancy occur?

Because state law is silent on this issue, it would be wise for a city library board to: (1) ask the city council to address it in an ordinance or resolution for the library, or (2) with the council's approval to write a vacancy clause in the board's by-laws.

As a guideline for the establishment of a policy on vacancies, the board may look at Idaho Code which deals with vacancies on library district boards. This section identifies a number of reasons for declaring a vacancy. The following are those which could be applicable to a city library board:

1. The death of a trustee.
2. The resignation of a trustee.
3. A trustee is no longer a city resident.
4. Upon appointment, a trustee refuses to serve.
5. Without an excuse acceptable to other board members, a trustee misses two consecutive meetings. (If the board wishes to use this criteria in its by-laws, it should be cleared with the city council.)

How long is the replacement's term?

According to Idaho Code 33-2605: "Appointments to complete an unexpired term shall be for the remainder of the term only."

Board Vacancies (Districts)

When does a vacancy occur?

Idaho Code 33-2716 gives the following reasons for declaring a vacancy:

1. When a nominee is elected but fails to qualify for office.
2. The death of a trustee.
3. The resignation of a trustee.
4. A trustee no longer resides in his trustee zone of residence.
5. A trustee is no longer a resident of the library district.
6. A trustee refuses to serve.
7. Without an excuse acceptable to other board members, a trustee misses two consecutive meetings.
8. A trustee is recalled.

How is a replacement made?

The board first must declare that a vacancy exists. This must be done either at a regular or special board meeting. They then have ninety days to name a replacement. If they do not name a replacement within that time period, the county commissioners of the district's home county must name a replacement.

How long is the replacement's term?

The appointed replacement serves until the next trustee election. At that time a trustee is elected to fill the unexpired term.

Do you measure up?
Evaluation of Board of Trustees

Yes	No	
☐	☐	1. Does the board operate under a written set of by-laws and follow the laws that govern board operations? Is there an effective committee structure that involves all members in board work?
☐	☐	2. Are board meetings run in a business-like manner with a minimum amount of time devoted to unimportant matters?
☐	☐	3. Does the board meet monthly at a regular time with an agenda and other relevant documents distributed in advance? Are minutes compiled and mailed to members following the meetings?
☐	☐	4. Are arrangements made to make sure the library director attends board meetings and committee meetings?
☐	☐	5. Is there a training or orientation program for new trustees jointly conducted by senior trustees and the library director? Is a local trustee notebook maintained to supplement this manual?
☐	☐	6. Are qualifications and duties clearly stated? Are terms of appointment limited? Does the board represent the whole community? If you are a city library, do you work closely with the mayor and city council who appoint trustees?
☐	☐	7. Do board members maintain an up-to-date policy manual?
☐	☐	8. Has the board adopted a written long range plan that serves as the basis for services and activities?
☐	☐	9. Is there a step-by-step plan for the future growth and development of the library?
☐	☐	10. Does the board work systematically to assure adequate current and future library funding?
☐	☐	11. Does the board systematically evaluate itself, the director, and the library plan annually?
☐	☐	12. Does the board encourage and fund members and staff attendance at local, state, and national library meetings?
☐	☐	13. Is there good communication between the library director and the board, between the president/chair and the members, between the board and related public groups, among various board members?

The Board Meeting

Self-evaluation for Trustees	Yes	No
1. Do you understand and respect the different roles and duties of the library director and trustee board?	☐	☐
2. Have you attended every board meeting and appropriate committee meeting since becoming a trustee?	☐	☐
3. Do you prepare and study the homework necessary to be a well-informed board participant?	☐	☐
4. Do you regularly read at least one library magazine and consult relevant books or pamphlets?	☐	☐
5. Do you strive to be aware of the implication of local, state and national legislation? Do you actively lobby at least on the local and state level?	☐	☐
6. Have you attended a state, and /or national library meeting or library workshop in the past year?	☐	☐
7. Have you attended a community event or meeting as a representative of the library in the last year?	☐	☐
8. Do you accompany the director to budget hearings before governing officials and actively work to gain funding from a variety of sources?	☐	☐
9. Have you visited your local library in the last 60 days?	☐	☐
10. Have you reviewed the library's policy manual to make sure you understand the rationale for service and needs for revision?	☐	☐
11. Have you reviewed the library's goals, objectives and plan in the past year?	☐	☐
12. When visiting other cities and other states do you visit the local library?	☐	☐
13. Do you evaluate the library director annually and discuss board expectations?	☐	☐
14. Have you ever read Idaho library laws and reviewed how they affect your responsibilities?	☐	☐
15. Are you a current member of any professional library association?	☐	☐

Budgeting and Financial Management

Introduction

We like to think of the public library as the "free library," but no library is free. The money needed for buying materials, paying salaries, maintaining a building, mailing interlibrary loans, paying the phone bill, and much more must come from somewhere. One of the most important board functions, therefore, is to systematically budget, raise, and account for their library's funds.

Budgeting

While we tend to think of budgeting simply as the allocation of available money, it is more useful to consider it as a planning process. The library's long-range plan spells out where the library hopes to go over a period of several years. The budget states what the library wants to do this year, and addresses the very practical issue of costs.

Because the library board has the legal responsibility for setting the budget and the library director and staff have the most knowledge of the day-to-day operation of the library, it is important that both the board and the staff be involved in the budgeting process.

The budgeting process should involve the following steps:

1. **Definition of Objectives.** At this point the staff and board should think about reasonable objectives for the upcoming year without regard to cost. If the library has a long-range plan, its plan for the specific year should be consulted. Other problems or opportunities that have arisen should be considered. This "dreaming" phase of the budgeting process should result in a list of potential objectives for the next year.

2. **Information Gathering.** In this phase of the process, information on the potential costs of maintaining services and reaching new goals is gathered. This is done in a number of different ways. The current year's expenses are examined, the rate of inflation is considered, new equipment or services are costed out by checking catalogs or contacting service providers. By the end of this process, the staff and board should have obtained cost estimates for achieving the library's defined objectives.

3. **Estimating Potential Income.** During this stage, which often overlaps the Information Gathering step, estimates are made of potential income. These include taxes, gifts, fines, fees, grants, and any other possible sources of funding for the library.

4. **Comparing Costs and Income.** At this stage, the costs of achieving objectives are compared with the library's potential income. If income

exceeds costs, all the objectives can be kept. More typically, the costs exceed the potential income, so the process goes to the next step.

5. Adjusting Objectives. This the hardest part of the budgeting process, because the library board and staff must decide what objectives are more or less important than others. Objectives may have to be deleted altogether from the year's budget or may have to be scaled back. This is best done through a negotiation process with all concerned. Objectives that cannot be included fully in the present year can, of course, be reconsidered with the next year's budget process.

6. Presenting the Budget. Once the budget has been written, it needs to be written out in a form that shows estimates of both income and expenditures. City libraries then need to present this document to the city council. District libraries must have a budget hearing that is open to the public. In both cases, board members should be able to fully explain the income and costs shown in the budget.

A good budget cannot be written the day before it is due. A full budget process is not something that is completed in just one board meeting. It is best to start thinking about the budget early in the spring, so plenty of time can be spent in both the Objectives Definition and Information Gathering phases. The more time that can be spent on the budget, the more useful it is likely to be.

Funding

Once a budget has been accepted, it is the board's responsibility to insure that adequate income to fund the budget is available. In the case of levied funds, this means monitoring income derived from taxes, and discussing any discrepancies between the levied amount and the collected amount with the appropriate city or county officials.

If the board has established a budget with the assumption that non-tax revenue will be available, it is responsible for developing a program to gain these funds. In some cases, this may mean designing a sophisticated fund raising program; in other cases it may mean participating in less formal money raising activities.

While public libraries in Idaho are funded primarily at the local level, it is important for board members to realize that public funding for library services provided by the state and federal governments can also have important direct and indirect impacts on the local library's services. Local board members can have a vital role in the legislative process. So another important function of board members is to represent their library's interest as these issues are raised.

Idaho law gives the library board exclusive control of the library's expenditures. This is not only a right; it is also a responsibility. While the board should delegate to the staff the power to make purchases of library materials, supplies and other necessary goods and services, it should be aware of all purchases and should monitor the budget throughout the year.

In order to do this, the board should establish bookkeeping systems that includes the following features:

1. **A monthly listing of all bills to be paid.** Bills should not be paid until approved by the board or a designated board financial committee. It is best if the full board approves all bills before payment. This would imply that the board should meet monthly. If the board uses a financial committee, all board members should receive a list of the bills to be approved before the committee meets.

2. **A monthly statement that shows:**

    a. The income for the month by income sources, along with total monthly income.

    b. The cumulative income for the year by income source along with total yearly income.

    c. Cash on hand.

    d. The expenditures for the month by budget expenditure category along with total monthly expenditures.

    e. The cumulative expenditures for the year by budget expenditure category along with total expenditures for the year.

    f. A list of library accounts, including checking and savings accounts, certificates of deposits, etc., with the amounts of money contained in each and their annual rates of interest.

3. **A procedure to have the library's financial records independently audited or reviewed as required by state and federal law (See IC 67-450B).**

What to Look for in Financial Statements

Every month library trustees should receive a copy of the library's monthly financial statement. The statement should include information about:

- Monthly and yearly income.
- Monthly and yearly expenditures.
- Cash on hand

What should the trustee look for in these reports?

1. Financial Patterns.

Are there yearly patterns of income?

For example, districts which get money directly from the levy can expect to have high tax income figures immediately after taxes are collected—typically in January and July. If this money doesn't show up, the board should find out why.

Are there yearly patterns of expenditures?

Typically, utility bills will be higher in the winter, for example. Many major publishers put out many important new books in the spring or fall. So book expenditures may be higher at those times of year. If the library purchases its magazines through a jobber, that large bill will come due once a year, and may make the materials expenditures for that month look unusually high.

Are interest rates the library has been receiving going up or down?

According to the Public Depository Law (IC 57-101 through 57-145), governmental entities are allowed to keep their funds only in certain specified kinds of financial institutions and accounts. This law should be read carefully before investing **any** funds held by the library.

The question of interest and investments is usually more important to the district library, because they typically have more control over their funds than do city libraries. The city library board, however, should be aware of how the city is investing its funds, and the amount of interest that is being collected on the library account. If possible, the city library should ask the city council to return this interest to the library.

Where the library has direct control of funds, it is vitally important that interest rates be watched. The library may want to put its "idle funds" into longer term investments if interest rates are falling. If they are rising, it may want to keep its funds in more liquid kinds of deposits. Careful investment procedures can insure that the library receives significant extra income through interest on its accounts.

State Treasurers Fund. One important option for investments is the State Treasurer's Local Government Investment Pool. This investment option gives relatively high interest rates combined with liquidity. For more information, contact the State Treasurer's Office, Room 102, Statehouse, Boise, Idaho 83720. Telephone (208) 334-3202 (Boise local) or 1-800-448-5447 (toll-free long distance).

2. Comparison of Budgeted Figures and Actual Amounts.

Each month, the percentage of money remaining in each item of the budget should be figured. Assuming a fairly even pattern of income and expenditures, the same percentage of money should be remaining as the percentage of time left in the year. For example, if the library has budgeted $36,000 for salaries, after the first month of the fiscal year, $3,000 should have been spent, and $33,000 (92%) should be left. Where income or expenditures run on an uneven pattern, of course, these patterns must be taken into account. Here are some questions that should be asked in comparing actual figures with budgeted amounts:

Is the library receiving the income it expected?

If income is low, the board needs to:

(1) investigate why the income is less than expected, and

(2) if necessary, make adjustments in the budget for expenditures to reflect the actual amount available.

If income is higher than expected, the board needs to (1) decided how this "windfall" will be used, and (2) determine whether this surplus is a one-time dividend or if it should be included on the income side of the next year's budget. In a few cases, the board may also have to decide whether the present budget should be re-opened so the extra money can be used in the present fiscal year.

Are expenditures what were expected?

Unusually high expenditures compared to budgeted figures need to be explained by the library director, and, if necessary, the board needs to make corrections in the budget to offset these unexpected expenditures.

Low expenditures also need to be explained. For example, if the book budget is being underspent, why is this happening? There may not be enough staff time to do book selection or processing, for instance. If this is the case, the board may want to move some funds into the staff budget.

3. Unusual income, expenditures, or interest rates.

Are there any strings attached to unusual income?

Often large gifts are not really "free." They may come with conditions which will not be good for the library in the long run. For example, if the library is required to set aside room or shelving for a special collection in order to receive money for the collection, does the library have the room to do this? Will it still have the room five, ten, or twenty years from now?

Has the board set adequate expenditure guidelines for the staff?

An unusually large non-regular expenditure made without board knowledge may indicate that the board has failed to set adequate guidelines. The board may, for example, want to be consulted before any non-regular expenditure exceeding a certain amount of money or certain percentage of the budget takes place. This amount usually varies depending on the library's budget.

Is the library's cash-on-hand held in such a way that is secure and yet earning the highest possible interest?

District library boards that keep more than $1,000 cash on hand have the responsibility to keep their money in accounts, in compliance with the Public Depository Law (Idaho Code Section 57, Chapter 1). Typically, this can be done by checking the interest rates offered by two or more financial institutions whose accounts are federally insured and which exist within the district. The district should normally deposit its accounts with the institution offering the highest interest rates.

City boards will usually not have direct control over their funds because they will be held by the city. It is the board's responsibility, however, to insure that the library account is treated fairly by the city, and an arrangement should be made with the city regarding the interest collected on the library funds.

What to look for in library bills

Should the library board look at the bills themselves?

Typically, it is easier for the board to work with a list of bills, rather than the bills themselves. The list should show the vendor from whom the bill has been received, a brief one or two word description of what the bill is for, the amount of the bill, and the check number for the check that will be used to pay the bill. Many libraries list their bills in alphabetical order by vendor name. A sample listing follows:

Check no.	Vendor	Amount
9123	Baker and Taylor (books)	$553.29
9124	Banker's Life (Insurance)	50.00
9125	Brodart (shelving)	690.45

While the board will not usually need to look at the bills themselves, the bills should be available for the board to examine if they feel the need.

Look for the unusual.

Most library bills are routine, and to ask questions about each bill would be impractical and time consuming. It is the board's responsibility, however, to ask questions about any bill that does not appear to be routine. For example, if a very large, unexpected bill appears, the board should find out what it is about. Similarly, the board may want to know more about a bill from an unusual vendor.

Look for required expenditures.

By law, the library is required to make payments for income tax withholding, social security and workers compensation. Board members should ask how often these payments are required and check to make sure they are being done.

Payments to staff or board member.

Unusual payments made to staff or board members should be explained at the meeting. For example, if the library is reimbursing a librarian for travel to a workshop, that payment should be explained. Putting this kind of explanation in the minutes insures there will be no appearance of staff or board members misusing library funds.

Sample Financial Statement

INCOME:

Source	Budget	Month Received	Year Received	% Received	Not Received
Property Tax					
Sales Tax					
Gifts					
Fines					
Fees					
Book Sales					
Interest					
TOTAL					

The income portion of the financial statement should give a clear picture of the sources from which the library expects to receive income. The sources listed here are typical income sources, but they are not exhaustive. For example, some libraries may have special annual fundraising activities, such as rummage sales or auctions. Such annual events may receive an entry of their own on the financial statement.

For each source, a budgeted amount should be estimated at the time that the board makes out the annual budget for the library. This figure will be placed in the "Budget" column.

The next column, "Month Received," shows the amount received in the past month from each income source.

The "Year Received" column shows the cumulative amount of income from each source for the entire fiscal year up to and including the present month. For example, the figures for October in both the month columns and the year columns should be equal. The "Year Received" column in the November report should be the sum of the October "Year Received" column and the November "Month Received" column.

The "% Received" column is figured by dividing the figures in the "Year Received" column by the "Budget" figures. This column provides a quick check on how actual income is doing against the projected income of the budget for each source. For example, if six months into the fiscal year, the library has already achieved 75 percent of its budgeted figure for fines, it probably means the budget underestimated the amount of income that would be derived from this source. A note of caution, however, is that most income sources do not pay evenly across the year. It may be that the library is used more between October and March than it is between April and

September. If this is the case, it would be expected that income from fines would also be higher during these months. Thus, the 75 percent figure may represent a typical yearly pattern of income collection from fines, rather than "windfall" income.

The last column, "Unreceived," shows the budgeted amount not yet received by the library. The figure is derived by subtracting the "Year Received" figure for each source from the "Budget" figures. Again, figures in this column provide a quick check for the board as to how the actual income compares to the expected income from each source.

EXPENDITURES:

Item	Budget	Month Expended	Year Expended	Remaining	% Remaining
Personnel					
Salaries					
FICA					
Pension					
Insurance					
Work. Comp.					
Cont. Educ.					
SUBTOTAL					
Materials					
Books					
Magazines					
Audio-Visual					
Processing					
SUBTOTAL					
Building					
Heat					
Electric					
Supplies					
Repairs					
Insurance					
SUBTOTAL					
Other					
Equipment					
Library Sup.					
Office Sup.					
Board Exp.					
Treas. Bond					
Programs					
Election Exp.					
SUBTOTAL					
TOTAL					

As with the sample income statement, the sample expenditures sheet lists some typical expenses for a small library. The list is not exhaustive, and some of the expenses will not apply to all libraries. For example, the "Treasurer's Bond" and "Election Expenses" listed under the "Other" category applies only to district libraries.

Similarly, the way the expenditures are categorized is just one of many ways that expenditures might be listed. In larger libraries, for example, expenditures may be listed by "program." In this type of listing, expenses might be listed under such categories as "Adult Services," "Children's Services," "Technical Services," "Bookmobiles," and "Administration."

The "Budget," "Month Expended," and "Year Expended" columns in the expenditures sheet correspond to the first three columns in the Income portion of the report. "Budget" shows how much the library expected to spend; "Month Expended" shows the amount expended this month; and "Year Expended" shows how much has been spent over the whole fiscal year.

The "Remaining" column shows how much the library can spend on each category and still remain within the budget. It is figured by subtracting the figures in the "Year Expended" column from the "Budget" column. The "% Remaining" column is figured by dividing the budgeted figures into the amounts remaining for each expenditure item. Like the "% Received" in the Income report, this figure provides the board with a quick check of how actual expenditures are running against the expected expenditures listed in the budget.

Cash on Hand

Account	Amount	Interest Rate	Maturity Date
Checking Acct(s)			
(Institutions)			
Savings Acct(s)			
(Institutions)			
Cert. of Deposit			
(Institutions)			
Petty Cash			
TOTAL			

The Cash on Hand portion of the financial report tells the board exactly where the library's money is being kept, the amount of interest it is earning, if the library has any term investments, (such as certificates of deposit), and how soon the money will be available without an interest penalty.

The categories of accounts is not exhaustive, but these are the typical kinds of accounts used by most libraries. Under each kind of account, the names of the specific financial institutions where money is held should be listed.

In the "Amount" column, the exact amount, to the penny, that is held in each account, should be listed. These amounts should be calculated for the last day of the month, and should show the amounts in each account after bills have been paid and income deposited.

The interest column shows the amount of interest being earned on each account. The library should check on rates of interest for savings and checking accounts periodically to insure it is earning good rates. Before purchasing certificates of deposits and other longer term investments the library should check with several institutions within their service area to get the best possible rates.

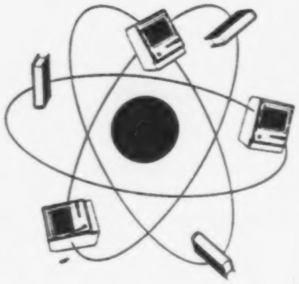
Maturity dates only apply to investments that must be kept with the institution for a set period of time. This kind of investment should only be made if the library is certain that the money will not be needed before the maturity date.

Petty cash is the money the library holds in the library itself to make change or to make small purchases for items needed immediately. A strict account of petty cash should be kept.

Trustee Self-assessment of Library Finance

		Yes	No
1.	Our board begins the budgeting process in the spring.	☐	☐
2.	None of our bills are paid until the board approves them.	☐	☐
3.	Our financial reports include information on income, expenditures, and cash-on-hand.	☐	☐
4.	I am aware of where all library accounts are held.	☐	☐
5.	Our library complies with legal audit requirements.	☐	☐
6.	I would feel confident explaining the library's financial situation at a public meeting.	☐	☐

The Trustee and Policy Making



Introduction

One of the most important functions of the library board is to establish the policies of the library. Policies can be defined as "a broad course of action selected from alternatives and in light of given conditions, to guide and determine present and future decisions." Policies differ from procedures in that policies are broad and procedures are specific. Policies tend to be more philosophical; procedures more technical.

In public libraries, policies are established by the board with the input of the staff. Procedures, on the other hand, are developed by the staff to carry out the policy. For example, it may be the policy of the library to open at 10 a.m. Procedures include turning on the lights, unlocking the door, and so forth.

Important policies that every library should have include:

1. **Board By-Laws.** These are the rules under which the board will operate. It describes the board offices and the duty of each office, the rules under which regular and special meetings will be held, the standing committees of the board (if any), and any other permanent operating procedures for the board itself.

2. **Personnel.** This policy includes the duties and powers of the staff, job descriptions, information on evaluation and discipline of staff members, grievance procedures, and description of benefits. Sometimes salary information is also included.

3. **Collection Development.** This describes the kinds of materials that will and will not be added to the collection based on community needs and interests. It will give the criteria that will be used in selecting these materials and will tell who is responsible for this selecting. It will explain how gift materials will be handled, how the collection will be weeded, and how challenges to materials will be met.

4. **Operational Policies.** This group of policies will include information about when the library will be opened and closed, circulation procedures, and loan periods. They will explain who has the right to use the library, and what fines or fees will be charged. They will also explain what the staff should do in case of particular kinds of emergencies, and will describe what is and is not acceptable patron behavior in the library.

5. Program Policies. These policies explain what kind of programs, both for children and adults, the library will have; they will describe who can attend these programs and who is responsible for organizing them and putting them on. If the library has a meeting room or special equipment for meetings, it will describe who can use these resources.

Materials in this section of the manual will include sample by-laws, and outlines that can be used in developing each of the additional kinds of policies.

Policy Making: Top Priority

Policy making is one of the board's most important functions. The board is responsible for establishing written policies to govern and guide all phases of library operation, both internal and external.

Policy statements must be tailored to local conditions and needs, and express a **true** commitment to service and leadership. For city libraries, it is advisable to inform the city council about policies that are potentially controversial. Governing authorities may be questioned by the community and should be cognizant of policy rationale or revisions of policy that could cause public inquiry.

Policies

Policies are guidelines for making decisions.

- General statements or understandings that channel thinking in future decision making
- Broadly stated guidelines for actions and decisions
- Any governing document, principle or plan
- Written contract in which one part guarantees to insure the rights of another party
- General statement for supporting library operations, rules, regulations, and use
- Basis for procedures but not detailed course of action
- Statement in accordance with purpose and legal basis for library
- Effective tools for transferring decision making to lower levels in the organization
- Effective or operational the day it is formulated and continued effective until it is revised or deleted
- Leads to achievements of objectives

The Trustee and Policy Making

Benefits of written policies:

- They indicate a basic honesty and integrity of the library's intentions
- They support the overall library plans, goals and objectives
- They become available to everyone in the same form
- They guide the library director and staff in implementation of board judgments
- They can be referred to so anyone who wishes can check
- They can be disseminated to all who are affected
- They provide direction and consistency in day-to-day service to community and library operations
- They can be taught more easily to new employees
- They can reduce uninformed decision-making and crisis responses to problem situations
- They can be referred to when misunderstandings occur
- They can force the board to think more sharply, thus helping achieve further clarity
- They can protect the rights and assures fair treatment of all patrons and staff members
- They generate confidence of all persons in the organization concerning the library's management

Effective Policy Making

To be most effective, policies should be:

- **reflective** of the objectives and plans of the library,
- **consistent**, so efficiency is maintained,
- **flexible**, so they can be changed as new needs arise,
- **distinguishable** from procedures,
- **written**, so they are easily communicated to staff

Policy Malpractice

To avoid "policy malpractice," board members might ask the following questions:

- **Is this an instant policy?**
- **Is this a dictatorial policy?**
- **Is this an illegal policy?**
- **Is this a sloppy policy?**
- **Is this a contradictory policy?**

Organization

Policies should be:

- recorded
- compiled and organized for ready access in a policy manual
- numbered and date of adoption noted
- updated and revised

Distribution

- every **trustee**
- copies in the library

Types of Library Policies

Two major categories:

External Policies, govern service to the community, other libraries, agencies, etc.

Internal Policies, govern the management of the library system.

The Library Policy Manual

Organization

To be effectively implemented, all policies should be recorded, compiled and organized for ready access in a **Policy Manual**. A loose-leaf binder is a useful format to accommodate new policies and revisions. The contents of a Policy Manual are probably best categorized and numbered under some form of topical heading for easy reference.

As each new policy or revision is adopted, the policy should be numbered and the date of adoption noted. Trustees wishing to review a policy can then refer to the appropriate minutes and reports to learn what alternatives were considered and why the specific policy option was adopted.

Distribution

Every trustee should have a copy of the Policy Manual and be completely familiar with the rationale for each statement. A thorough understanding of all policies is essential in order to knowledgeably adopt new policies or revise existing ones. Trustees may also be called upon to defend or interpret policies to the public or governing officials.

Copies of the Policy Manual should also be housed in all libraries. The director is responsible for instructing personnel in the rationale of policies so that staff members understand the basis for procedures.

What should you do if your library does not have a policy manual?

Make one of the following motions:

1. The library director should review all of the board minutes and list all policies (with the date of adoption) and categorize them into topical headings.
2. The appropriate committees of the board: finance, personnel, etc., should be requested to review policies for clarity, completeness and comprehensiveness.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Nuts and Bolts of Policy Development

Policy development and changes are major decisions affecting established practice and policies. Trustees should allow adequate time for policy consideration and avoid incomplete assessment of possible options. If unresearched recommendations are arbitrarily rubber-stamped by the board without due consideration, the trustees will waste time reconsidering prior decisions, acting in crisis situations and rebuilding lost confidence of the staff and community.

Who?

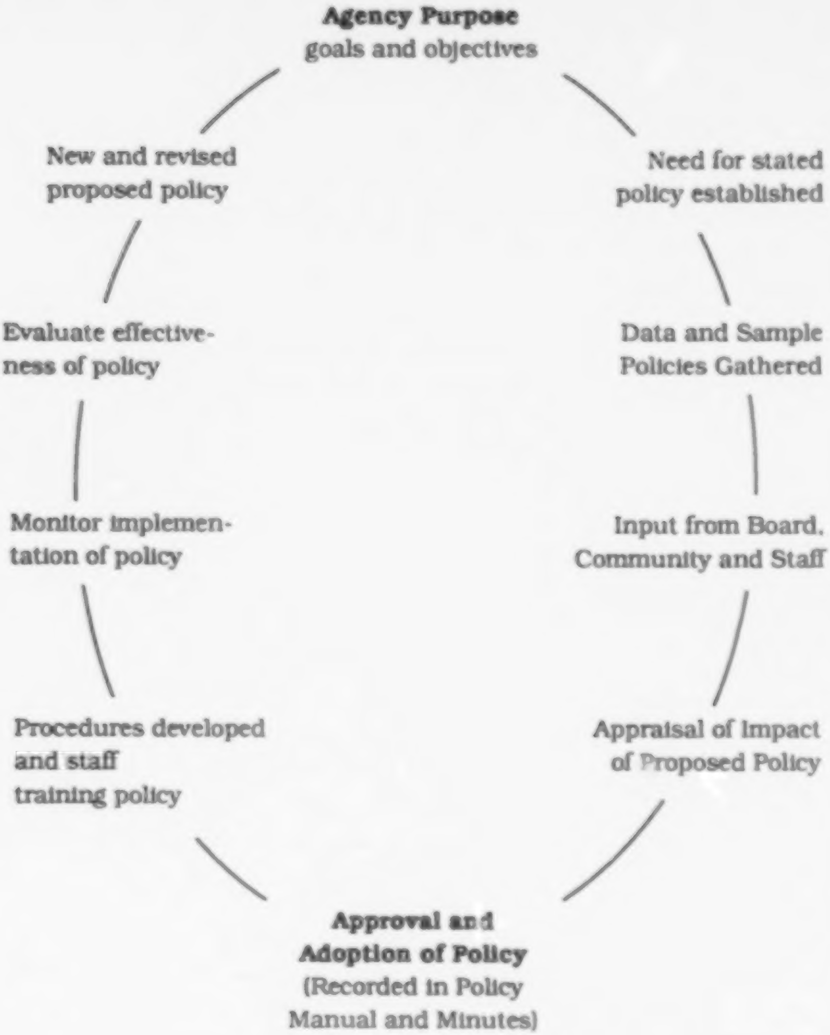
While only trustees have the legal responsibility and authority to make policy, experience shows that the decision process works best when the library director and other staff are involved in researching options, drafting policies and presenting a report to the board. In medium and large libraries, the staff usually assumes responsibility for submitting policy analysis to the appropriate board committee. In small libraries, trustees may often prepare the analysis of policy options.

Systematic policy development includes:

1. A statement of the condition or problem, past or present, that requires policy consideration.
2. A statement telling how any policy will contribute to the accomplishment of the library's goals and objectives.
3. A statement of all existing policies related to or affected by the policy decision.
4. A listing of policy options available, with an analysis:
   a. long and short range effects of enacting new policy
   b. potential side effects — good or bad —of passing each policy
   c. relevant legal ramifications
   d. cost in terms of library resources: staff, budget, collection and buildings
5. A recommendation accompanied by a summary of the corresponding rationale for changes in related policies.
6. Draft of concisely worded statement.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

The Trustee and Policy Making



Agency Purpose
goals and objectives

Need for stated
policy established

Data and Sample
Policies Gathered

Input from Board,
Community and Staff

Appraisal of Impact
of Proposed Policy

Approval and
Adoption of Policy
(Recorded in Policy
Manual and Minutes)

Procedures developed
and staff
training policy

Monitor implementation of policy

Evaluate effectiveness of policy

New and revised
proposed policy

Policies are not carved in stone!
Resources, communities and goals change and grow.
Policies must reflect current needs and services.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Sample Bylaws (Cities Version)

Bylaws and Rules of
the Board of Trustees of the
(name of library)

Article I—Name

This organization shall be called "The Board of Trustees of the ____________ Library" existing by virtue of the provision of Title 33, Chapter 26 of the laws of the State of Idaho, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

Article II —Membership

Section 1. Members of the Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the Mayor and City Council in accordance with Idaho Code 33-2604.

Section 2. A vacancy shall be reported to the City Council within five days whenever a member dies, resigns, moves out of the city limits, or fails to attend, without an excuse acceptable to the board, two (2) consecutive regular meetings.

Article III —Officers

Section 1. The officers shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer, elected from among the appointed trustees at the annual meeting of the board.

Section 2. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chairperson three months prior to the annual meeting who will present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 3. Officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected.

Section 4. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

Section 5. The vice chairperson, in the event of the absence or disability of the chairperson, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chairperson.

the duties and functions of the chairperson.

Section 6. The secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

Section 7. The treasurer shall be the financial officer of the board. He/She will sign all vouchers for bills to be paid by the city, will receive and verify all financial reports from the city, and will perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. In the absence or inability of the treasurer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the board as the board may designate.

Article IV —Meetings

Section 1. The regular meetings shall be held on a uniform day each month, the day and hour to be set by the board at its annual meeting, unless otherwise ordered by the board.

Section 2. The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of the election of officers and the adoption of an annual report, shall be held at the time of the regular meeting in (month) of each year.

Section 3. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit.

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by the secretary at the direction of the chairperson, or at the request of two members, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. If the time and place of a special meeting has not been determined at a regular board meeting with all members present, a notice of the time and place of the special meeting shall be sent to all board members, and written notice shall be posted in the library and sent to all news media requesting notification not less than 24 hours before the meeting, unless an emergency exists.

Section 5. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three members of the board present in person.

Section 6. Conduct of meetings: proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by (standard work in parliamentary law, e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.)

Article V —Library Director and Staff

The Board shall appoint a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the board and under its review and direction. The director shall recommend to the board the appointment and specify the duties of other employees and shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of the library property, for an adequate and proper selection of books in keeping with the stated policy of the board, for the efficiency of library service to the public and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation. In the case of part-time or temporary employees, the director shall have interim authority to appoint without prior approval of the board provided that any such appointment shall be reported to the board at its next regular meeting.

Article VI —Committees

Section 1. The chairperson shall appoint standing committees to be made up of (number) members for ________. Members of standing committees are appointed at the annual meeting, and serve for one year.

Section 2. The chairperson shall appoint committees of one or more members each for such specific purposes as the business of the board may require from time to time. The committee shall be considered to be discharged upon the completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the board.

Section 3. All committees shall make a progress report to the library board at each of its meetings.

Section 4. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted specific power to act.

Article VII —Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all members of the board at any meeting that has a quorum, provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least (number) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Article VIII —General

Section 1. An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chairperson may vote upon and may move a proposal before the board. No seconds shall be required for the board to consider a motion.

Section 2. Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise; may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which at least three members of the board shall be present and three of those present shall so approve.

Sample Bylaws (District Version)

Bylaws and Rules of
the Board of Trustees of the
(name of library district)

Article I - Name

This organization shall be called "The Board of Trustees of the ________________________ Library" existing by virtue of the provision of Title 33, Chapter 27 of the Laws of the State of Idaho, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

Article II - Membership

Section 1. The members of the board shall be those persons appointed or elected to the board in accordance with Idaho Code 33-2715 through 33-2718. The (name of district) (has or has not) established trustee zones.

Section 2. A vacancy shall be declared by the board

(a) when any nominee has failed to qualify for office,

or

(b) within thirty days when any trustee shall

(1) die
(2) resign as a trustee
(3) no longer be a resident of the district
(4) refuse to serve as a trustee
(5) without an excuse acceptable to the board, fail to attend two (2) consecutive board meetings.
(6) no longer be a resident of his/her trustee zone of residence.

Article III - Officers

Section 1. The officers of the district shall be a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, and a clerk.

Section 2. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chairperson three months prior to the annual meeting who will present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Section 3. Elected officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected.

Section 4. The chairperson shall be elected from the elected or appointed trustees and shall preside at all meetings of the board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, serve as an ex officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

Section 5. The vice chairperson shall be elected from the elected or appointed trustees, and in the event of the absence or disability of the chairperson, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chairperson.

Section 6. The secretary for the board shall be the library director. He/She shall have no voting rights. The secretary shall ensure that a true and accurate record of all meetings of the board shall be kept, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

Section 7. The board shall appoint some qualified person, who may or may not be a member of the board of trustees, to act as treasurer of the library district. The treasurer shall be the disbursing officer of the board, co-sign all checks, and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. He/She shall be bonded for a minimum of $5,000 or in a greater amount as may be required by a resolution of the board. In the absence of inability of the treasurer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the board as the board may designate. A treasurer who is not a member of the board shall have no vote.

Section 8. The board shall appoint some qualified person, who may or may not be a member of the board of trustees to act as clerk of the library board. The clerk shall conduct library district elections as specified in Idaho Code, shall prepare and distribute legal notices, and shall have other duties as the board may prescribe.

Article IV - Meetings

Section 1. The regular meetings shall be held on a uniform day each month, the day and hour to be set by the board at its annual meeting, unless otherwise ordered by the board.

Section 2. The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of administering the oath of office to new or re-elected trustees, the election of officers, establishing a regular meeting date, and the review of by-laws, policies, and procedures, shall be held at the time of the first regular meeting following trustee elections of each year.

Section 3. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit.

- Call to Order
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Approval of Bills
- Director's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by the secretary at the direction of the chairperson, or at the request of two members, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. Written notice of special meetings will be given to board members at least two (2) days prior to the day of the meeting, and sent to all news media requesting notification not less than 24 hours before the meeting, unless an emergency exists.

Section 5. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three (3) members of the board present in person, but a smaller number may adjourn.

Section 6. Conduct of meetings: proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by (standard work in parliamentary law, e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.)

Article V - Library Director and Staff

The board shall appoint a qualified library director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the board and under its review and direction. The director shall recommend to the board the appointment and specify the duties of other employees and shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of the library property, for an adequate and proper selection of books in keeping with the stated policy of the board, for the efficiency of library service to the public and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation. In the case of part-time or temporary employees, the director shall have interim authority to appoint without prior approval of the board provided that any such appointment shall be reported to the board at its next regular meeting.

Article VI - Committees

Section 1. The chairperson shall appoint standing committees to be made up of (number) members for (purposes). Members of standing committees are appointed at the annual meeting, and serve for one year.

Section 2. The chairperson shall appoint committees of one or more members each for such specific purposes as the business of the board may require from time to time. The committee shall be considered to be discharged upon the completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the board.

Section 3. All committees shall make a progress report to the library board at each of its meetings.

Section 4. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted specific power to act.

Article VII - Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all members of the board at any meeting that has a quorum, provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least (number) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Article VIII - General

Section 1. An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chairperson may vote upon and may move a proposal before the board. No second shall be required for the board to consider a motion.

Section 2. Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which three members of the board shall be present and three of those present shall so approve.

Trustee Self-Assessment: Policies

		Yes	No
1.	Our board has written by-laws	☐	☐
2.	Our library has a written collection development policy.	☐	☐
3.	Our library has a written personnel policy.	☐	☐
4.	Our library has written operational policies.	☐	☐
5.	Our policies are compiled in a manual, which is available to the staff and public.	☐	☐
6.	We review each of our policies annually.	☐	☐

The Trustee and Library Planning

Introduction

In a rapidly changing world such as ours, all institutions will also change over time. For each institution the question then is not "Will we change?" but "How will we change?"

The public library that does not plan will change. But the change will lack a focus. It will be in response to immediate pressures rather than to meet long-range needs. The library, in other words, will drift.

Change by drift, however, is likely to make the library less and less relevant to its community's real needs. Faced with the choice between an agency that is playing a dynamic role in community affairs and one which is adrift in the sea of change, the public is likely to support the agency that is truly meeting its needs.

The library board and library staff can do nothing to stem the tide of societal change, but they can make the library more efficiently responsive to change by developing a long-range plan. Such a plan, which usually covers a three to five year period, establishes the library's role or roles in the community, and gives the library an overall direction to pursue. Based on these long term decisions, specific short term decisions can be made in light of their long-range implications.

Planning, then, is essential for the public library, and it is a vital part of the function of the library board.

Long-range planning for public libraries has been one of the major focuses of the Public Library Division of the American Library Association for many years. The division has created a number of valuable resources for planning. These include:

> *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries.* (Chicago: ALA, 1987.)

and

> *Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures.* (Chicago: ALA, 1987.)

Both of these can be borrowed from the Idaho State Library, but the library that establishes a planning process is likely to want to have its own copies.

Although it is recommended that libraries use the materials above, materials in this section of the manual will include hints on how some of the basic tasks of the planning process can be carried out.

The Trustee and Library Planning

Library boards continuously guide, shape and build library services for their community as they make judgments on money, buildings, programs and staff. The challenge is to make these decisions based on a carefully considered written plan. The purpose of planning is to anticipate both opportunities and problems.

Definition of a Plan: Chart your course

- Systematic decision-making process to set goals for future development and plan strategies for reaching these goals
- Recognition of present situation, identification of needs, determination of objectives and priorities; decision on actions needed

Definition of Goals: Reach for the blue sky

- General statements with broad aims and final purposes to be "achieved"
- Rarely reached, because successful fulfillment of objectives moves goals to even higher levels

Example: To increase the public's awareness of the value and use of Anytown Library System's resources and services by working closely with the media, developing relationships with community groups and improving communication with individual citizens.

Definition of Objectives: Go for it!

- Measurable accomplishments that show goals are being achieved.

Example: To increase the number of citizens who register for library cards by three percent in [year].

Planning: Challenges for the Future

Benefits or Written Plans

- Makes it easier to justify your budget with governing authorities
- Helps you prioritize programs and direct efforts towards tasks leading to the attainment of objectives

Planning Hints

Planning is not an easy task. It requires time and careful organization to accomplish. Special board committees should be formed and a series of planning meetings scheduled to allow ample time to explore, brainstorm and dream before making final decisions.

Boards can create advisory committees, sponsor public meetings, encourage open staff discussions, hire outside consultants and use public relations tools in the planning process. Participation leads to support and understanding of the plan developed. The library director and board are partners planning with the community, not just for the community.

Don't overlook the regional planning commission or professional planners who are part of local government. Be sure to keep them informed of library goals and work with them to include library service in the community's plans at every possible point.

Successful planning allows a choice of options and avoids the "this-is-the-way-we-do-it" syndrome.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Recipe for a Plan

Since planning is a continuing process based on evaluation and reassessment, a **plan** is a flexible document seasoned by specific local needs. However, most plans include the following essentials:

- Description of the library's service area and communities
- Summary of data supporting library's needs
- A mission statement that states the overall purpose of the library
- Statement of general goals and specific objectives
- Details of services, programs, personnel, collection and facilities desired
- Identification of priorities
- Timetable for achieving goals and objectives, both short-range and long-range
- Assignments and responsibilities for implementing the plan
- Publicity campaign to accompany changes
- Provision for evaluation and reassessment at specific intervals

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Steps to Planning

Planning involves five basic questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want go?
3. How do we get there?
4. What timetable will move us most effectively?
5. How will we know what we accomplish?

When the answer to the last question is reached, you have the plan.

Following the Five Steps:

1. Assess the library's present situation. Similar to the policy making process, you need to study the community in depth, including any projections for anticipated community development. Study the library services and resources in light of standards of service and community's needs.

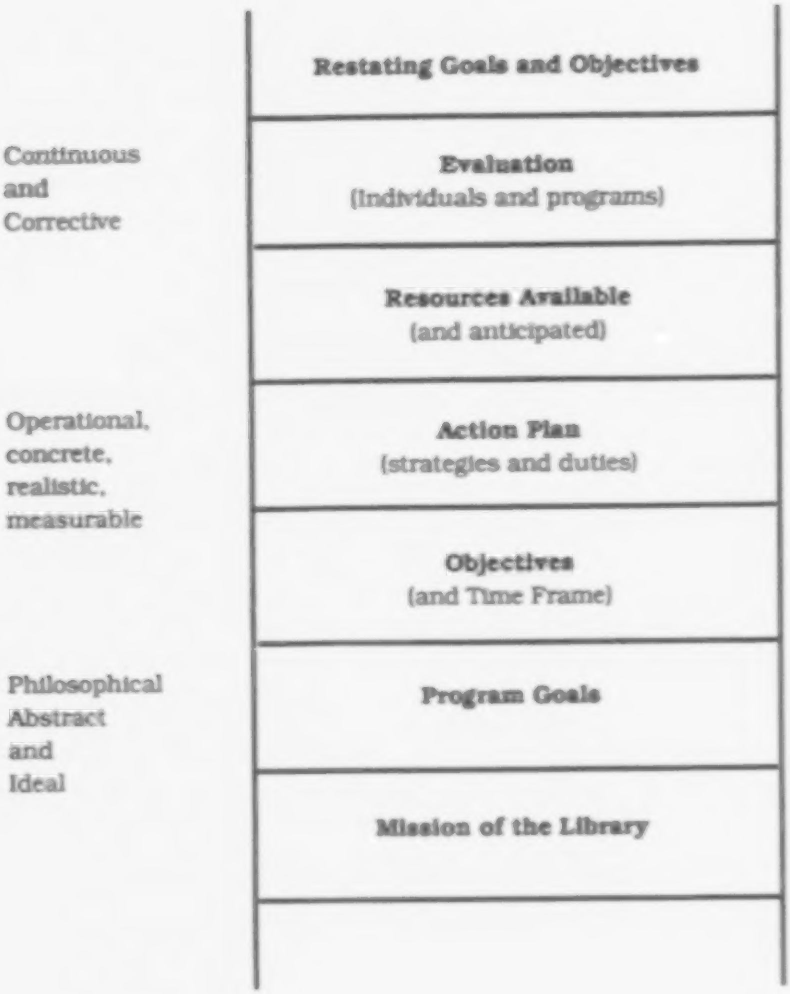
2. Construct a picture of the library as it should be in one year and in five years. Determine goals that support the mission of the library system.

3. Set objectives and activities that will move the library toward the goals established. Examine as many alternative approaches as possible. Select the most feasible in terms of anticipated resources. Develop your action strategies and tactics. Consider contingency plans and be realistic!

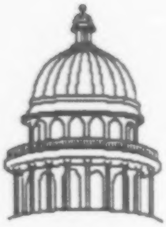
4. Divide the selected approach into steps and map out the time frame for accomplishment. Assign priorities for essential steps, desirable steps and optional steps. This ranking will dictate allocation of time, effort and funding.

5. Determine a basis for evaluating progress toward reaching the goals and objectives. Informally monitor your plan regularly. Review and revise your plan annually.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.


Restating Goals and Objectives
Continuous and Corrective
Evaluation (Individuals and programs)
Resources Available (and anticipated)
Operational, concrete, realistic, measurable
Action Plan (strategies and duties)
Objectives (and Time Frame)
Philosophical Abstract and Ideal
Program Goals
Mission of the Library

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.



Guidelines for Public Library Long-Range Plans

I. Environment

A. Government

1. Political structure - general overview

- a. Form or type
- b. Planning District(s)
- c. County(ies)
- d. Municipalities
- e. Special Taxing Districts

2. Legal Base of Library Operation - Library System

- a. Enabling legislation
- b. Position in governmental hierarchy
- c. Administrative structure of the system

  1. Relationship to political and/or service units

  2. Contractual agreements, etc.

B. Geographic/Demographic Data

1. Major physical features of geographic area served

- a. Land area
- b. Topographical barriers, physical feature deterrents

2. Population density

3. Composition of population

- a. Ethnic composition
- b. Age variables (present concentrations of population by age groups)
- c. Educational attainment levels
- d. Per capita income/median income
- e. In-migration/nativity/vital statistics
- f. Population projections

C. Fiscal Structure

1. Revenue sources

2. Brief budgetary report (i.e. percent of total budget allocated to Personnel, Books/Publications, etc.)

3. Valuation of service area, millage limitations

4. Constraints on existing revenue income (stipulated use, expenditure deadlines, etc., surplus reversion to appropriating authority)

5. Total per capita funding/expenditure

D. External systems and point of interface with public library development

1. **Service delivery systems**—public and private: availability and kinds of allied services —educational, recreational informational, e.g.:

   a. Cooperating libraries (school-college-special)
   b. Institutions other than libraries that might affect library demand
   c. Institutions other than libraries that supply recorded information (e.g. bookstores, newsstands, rural extension service)

2. **Governmental constraints**

   a. Proposed consolidation or annexation
   b. Ceilings on tax structure

3. **Economic climate**

E. Identification of strengths and weaknesses as they relate to ALA and ILA standards in specific areas:

1. **Staff**

2. **Collection**

3. **Facilities**

4. **Finance**

F. Identification of strengths and weakness as they relate to delivery of services:

1. **Relevance and adequacy of current program as it relates to library clientele**

2. **Determine unserved segments of population**

3. **Determine unfilled service demands/requests**

G. Results of library surveys, evaluations, etc. (Include copy of report or summation)

Based upon the above needs assessment, set goals and objectives, based on a hierarchy of objectives and develop criteria for measurement of the activities completed to determine how well objectives are being achieved.

Basically, format under each goal should be as follows:

Goal

Long-range objectives
Dates for achievement

Short-range objectives
Dates for achievement

Tasks or activities under short-range objectives
Dates for achievement

Criteria for evaluation of short-range objectives

Alternatives of these objectives are not effective in meeting goal.

A more comprehensive format could be used by adding intermediate objectives and assumption statements.

Under each goal, consideration should be given to the following as situation dictates:

1. Services
2. Collections
3. Staff
4. Finances
5. Facilities
6. Programming

Adapted with permission from *Florida Public Library Board Manual, 1988,* *published by the State Library of Florida.*

Tools for Planning

The following are tools in the planning process:

- **Statistics:** library services, circulation, collection, general output measures.
- **Data:** census figures, community analysis, results of surveys or studies made by the library and/or other community agencies and institutions
- **Lists:** library activities and services ideas and suggestions
- **People:** staff, community leaders, Friends, Idaho State Library
- **Groups:** counties, municipalities, schools, regional planning agencies, colleges and universities with information to share
- **Community Cooperation:** attend public meetings and listen to the needs; make presentations to organized groups; prepare exhibits and displays in the library and other locations
- **Staff Meetings:** input from the "front line" assures commitment to a realistic plan
- **Professional Consultants:** (especially if moving toward a building program): professional methods and the benefits of experience
- **Media:** press, radio and television willing to help you spread the word and find exciting ways of conveying information
- **Other Libraries:** neighbors with proven programs; academic, school and special libraries filling out the total service pattern
- **Library Literature:** newsletters, the professional journals, articles, speeches and bulletins
- **Idaho Library Association**
- **Workshops and Conferences:** addressing the responsibilities of trustees and needs of public libraries

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Planning Library Buildings

As trustees face the challenges of planning library services for the future, increased space and additional locations may become a major consideration. Boards must decide whether to build a new library, renovate or expand current facilities or find an existing space to be converted into a library. Construction plans should be considered in the context of the total library plan. Trustees need to study service needs, explore alternatives, project funding and establish priorities.

Planning Responsibilities

The Idaho State Library Building Consultant will serve as your guide to the complex process of completing a building program. Trustees, staff, consultants, architects, interior designers, city councils, county boards and regional planning departments, and community members all fit into the picture.

Library Staff : The library director and staff actively participate in planning for construction projects by compiling information, surveys and statistics; preparing building applications and reports; maintaining project records, etc.

Library Building Consultant: This person is usually and experienced librarian who has participated in several successful building projects. The cost of a building consultant can usually be saved many times over in reductions in construction and operating costs. Working with board and staff, the building consultant can provide any or all of the following services:

- survey the library's space needs
- write the library building program
- project future staff and operating costs
- prepare a preliminary project budget
- provide site analysis and recommendations
- provide advice on funding options
- provide assistance in selection of the architect
- review all plans prepared by the architect and provide a written evaluation
- review needs, specifications and layout for shelving, furniture and equipment
- provide a final inspection of the facility

Planning Library Buildings

Responsibilities of Trustees for Building Projects:

- Determining that a new building is needed
- Providing leadership in the campaign to inform the community and secure necessary support for the project
- Appointing a building committee and assigning tasks
- Selecting and hiring a library building consultant
- Selecting and hiring an architect
- Selecting and hiring an interior design specialist
- Obtaining financing for the project
- Selecting and purchasing the site
- Approving the written building program
- Approving preliminary and final architectural plans
- Soliciting and approving bid document
- Approving all contracts and any change orders to the contract

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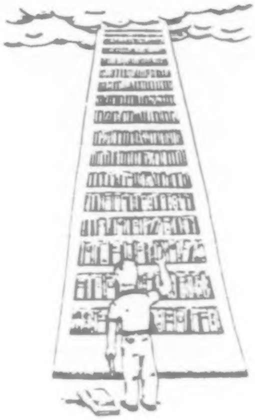


Trustee Self-Assessment: Planning

Yes	No		
☐	☐	1.	Our board has determined what roles our library will play in the community.
☐	☐	2.	Our library has a written mission statement.
☐	☐	3.	Our library has conducted a formal community survey.
☐	☐	4.	Our library has a written long-range plan.
☐	☐	5.	Each year our board dedicates at least one meeting to evaluating library services.

The Trustee, the Director, and the Staff

Introduction

Undoubtedly, the single most important decision that the library board will make is the employment of the library director.

A good library director will make the work of the board both easier, but at the same time more exciting. A good director will handle all the procedural problems of the library, so board members will be able to concentrate on long-term goals and policies of the library.

Failure to find and retain a good director, however, will create the most painful situation the board can face. Having an unskilled library director will create problems in the day-to-day operations of the library. It can cause resentment on the part of other staff members. And, most importantly, it can damage the library's relationship to its patrons. Ultimately, it may force the board to make a painful decision about whether the director should be retained or terminated.

Essentially, the library board/library director relationship can fail in two ways:

1. The Dominating Director. The director can try to dominate the board. In this situation the director fails to take direction from the board. In some cases, when the board is weak, she or he even tells the board what to do. Where a strong board is involved, each decision becomes a power struggle between the library board and the director.

2. The Dominating Board. The board can try to dominate the director. When this occurs, the board does not listen to the director. Because of this the board may not be informed of problems or important issues. Or the board may become too deeply involved in the day-to-day operations of the library. Staff members become confused about who they are to take orders from, the director or the board.

What characterizes a healthy relationship between the board and the library director? The answer is simple: mutual understanding and respect. This healthy relationship is shown in the following ways:

1. The board and the director recognize that each has an important role to play in providing library services.

2. The board provides the director with a written job description, and evaluates the director's work in a constructive way at least annually.

3. The board does not interfere with the daily operation of the library unless specifically asked by the director. In other words, the board allows the director to do the job s/he was hired to perform.

4. The director keeps the board adequately informed about the operation of the library. S/he recognizes when a decision goes beyond the authority of the staff, and takes these issues to the board.

5. The board solicits the director's opinions about all issues upon which they will act. They will especially ask how a specific decision might impact on the daily operation of the library.

6. The director carries out the policy of the board even if s/he does not agree with it. The director, in other words, recognizes that the board has the ultimate legal authority for operating the library.

7. When disagreements occur, they are discussed openly and honestly between the board and the director in the board meetings. Neither the board members nor the director discuss these problems with other members of the public behind each other's back.

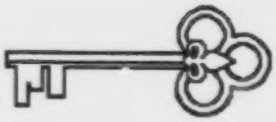
Additional resources in this manual will include materials on the relationship between the board and the library director, and information on hiring and evaluating the library director.

Responsibilities of Boards and Librarians

The responsibilities of trustees can be divided into four general categories:

- Governance & Policy Making
- Finance
- Personnel
- Service & Community Relations

Cooperation is the key.



The duties and responsibilities of the library board and the library director may appear to overlap. Understanding the differences in function assures teamwork and better library service.

Boards should not run their libraries; they should see that they are run properly. Boards should not attempt to manage their libraries; they must see that the libraries are managed properly.

Policy determination and management are different roles:

- Policy determination relies heavily on the board's participation and knowledge.

- Management is the responsibility of the person hired by the library board to administer, direct, or run the library.

Cooperation is the key.

The following comparative list shows the division between the complementary roles of the board of trustees and the library administrator:

The Trustee, the Director, and the Staff

Board of Trustees	Library Director/Librarian
Governance and Policy Making	
Determine the goals and objectives of the library and methods of evaluating progress toward meeting them. Review goals and objectives annually and evaluate progress.	Provide assistance and direction to the board in setting goals and objectives and determining methods of evaluation. Provide information and opinion on how the library is progressing.
Relate the library and its programs to the community and its needs, discovered through systematic study of the community and through systematic analysis of library service.	Assist the board to know the needs of the community and how to respond to these needs through library services.
Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation, use, and program of the library. Adopt bylaws for board procedures. Review policies on a regular basis, especially as part of the orientation of new trustees.	Recommend needed policies to the board and study examples and sources of information. Carry out the policies as adopted by the board. Interpret policies to the staff and public. Provide the board with recommendations and materials for study.
	Administer the library within the framework of the law and the library's goals and objectives, policies, and budget.

Know local, state, and national laws which affect libraries, and play an active part in initiating and supporting beneficial library legislation.

Be aware of and make use of the services and consultants of the Idaho State Library.

Attend regional, state, and national library association meetings and workshops when possible and join appropriate organizations working for improved libraries. Study library publications.

Budget for continuing education experiences for administration, staff and trustees.

The Trustee, the Director, and the Staff

Board of Trustees	Library Director/Librarian
Governance and Policy Making	
Seek a cooperative basis with officials of the municipality or other local governing unit, keeping in mind the special legal responsibilities of a library board.	Prepare all needed library reports for the local unity of government and the Idaho State Library. Provide copies to the board.
Attend all board meetings and committee meetings to which you are assigned. Carry out all special assignments properly.	Attend all board and committee meetings except those meetings or parts of meetings in which the librarian's salary and tenure are discussed.
Finance	
Be completely informed about the financial status of the library.	Provide regular reports of budget status and expenditures at each board meeting.
Work with the library director to formulate a budget adequate to carry out the library's goals and objectives, within any limitations of the state law.	Prepare for board discussion a suggested annual budget in consultation with staff and board. Supply facts and figures to the board to aid in interpreting the library's current and future financial needs.
Present the budget to the funding agency, public officials, and the general public; explain and defend it.	Follow the budget process as it moves through the funding process. Work with the board in interpreting budget and financial needs of the library to public officials and the public. Provide leadership in supporting the budget.
Work to secure adequate funds for staff and services.	Identify financial needs of the library and work with the board and staff for adequate funding.

The Trustee, the Director, and the Staff

Finance

Board of Trustees	Library Director/Librarian
Explore all ways of increasing the library's income through tapping other sources and taking advantage of all available means of cooperation with other libraries.	Call the board's attention to ways of stretching the budget. Assist the board in cooperating with other libraries.

See that complete and accurate records concerning finances, personnel, property inventory, and annual reports are on file at the library.

Personnel

Board of Trustees	Library Director/Librarian
Employ a competent and qualified library director and pay an adequate salary.	Act as technical advisor to the board. Hire and direct subordinate staff members in line with library personnel policies.
Provide adequate compensation and reasonable fringe benefits for all employees. Provide agreeable working conditions and opportunities for professional growth.	Work for needed improvements in working conditions, salary scales, and fringe benefits.
Provide a planned orientation program for new trustees.	Assist in the orientation of new trustees, including introduction to library procedures, departments, and staff.
Develop policies to guide staff selection.	Provide the board with recommendations and material for study. Apply guidelines in selecting staff. Take full responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the library.

Provide in-service training for the professional development of staff members on effective implementation of library policies. Whenever possible, provide opportunities for additional education and advancement. Consider establishment of career ladders within the library if possible.

Service and Community Relations

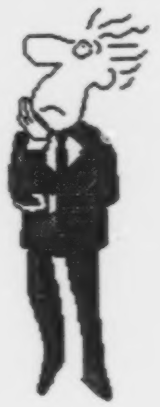
Board of Trustees	Library Director/Librarian
Interpret the community and its needs to the library director and reflect them in goals, objectives, and policies.	Interpret the community and its needs to the board.
Establish a library materials selection policy, reflecting community needs and including a freedom to read provision.	Supply information and expert advice on such a policy, together with recommendations reflecting professional knowledge. Select and order books and materials in harmony with the policy criteria.
Establish ways of providing service, not just to individuals, but to organized agencies and institutions within the community in both the public and private sector.	Offer regular and special services to public and private community groups. Seek effective and innovative ways of providing library services to groups, individuals, and the total community.

Establish, support, and participate in a planned community relations program, allocating responsibility for various tasks according to available personnel and talents.

Seek to extend library service to those who have been reluctant to use the library and to those unable to take advantage of customary library programs.

Hiring a Library Director

The selection of a competent library director can be the most important single act undertaken by the board of trustees. In the process of selecting and hiring, trustees should be aware of current practices in the profession, competitive salaries, benefits and state requirements. When seeking a director some boards will place more emphasis on imagination and energy, others on administrative experience, still others on education and erudition. Local conditions, such as the library's size, staff and resources, are all factors affecting the selection of the library director.



Preliminary Assessment

The board should make a realistic appraisal of the situation. They should decide what qualifications the library requires in a library director and what the library has to offer the librarian. Offer the best salary possible to secure the services of a qualified person. Consider any added incentives or challenges offered by the job opportunity.

Begin with a hard look at the current status of the library. Address some fundamental questions, such as:

- What is the role of the library in the community today?
- Have library needs changed? Has the library kept pace?
- What do you really want or need in the next director?
- What is the reason for the job opening? (An exit interview with the departing director is useful.)
- Are you losing someone upward-bound or to retirement?
- Was the previous director dissatisfied? If so, why?

The answers to these questions will influence the development of the job description. The board may want to redefine the job, elevate the position, revise qualifications and statements of job responsibilities.

Draft the job description.

Write or revise job description. Consult professional literature and the State Library to be certain that all legal requirements are met.

Include:

- Areas of responsibility
- Specific duties
- Salary and fringe benefits
- Period of probations
- Desirable areas of expertise
- Minimum qualifications and experience

Additional information:

- Current description of community
- Description of library's overall program and plan
- Significant trends or changes anticipated

Affirmative Action

Libraries must abide by federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination in relation to hiring, promotion and all other working conditions of employment. It is illegal to discriminate against qualified applicants on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, religion, age, country of national origin, individual life style or physical or mental disability. Stated policies should demonstrate that the library board makes every effort not to discriminate. Library boards have responsibility for determining deficiencies in their policies and adopting corrections.

Search Committee

It is good personnel practice to advertise a job opening to as many potential candidates as possible. Conduct a search even if there are staff members eligible for promotion. Qualified staff members should be encouraged to apply and the board should stress the goal is to select the best person for the job. All applicants should receive consideration and due process in accordance with equal opportunity laws.

A search committee of the board should compose a carefully worded ad for selected publications. Reading ads published by other libraries will serve as a guide for your ad based on the job description for library director. Be sure to specify a deadline for application; request resume and references; designate one trustee to receive applications.

Word-of-mouth

Advertise among friends and colleagues to spread the news of an available position. Send announcements to neighboring library systems and throughout the state. Keep in mind continuing relations with other libraries who may resent what they perceive as "raiding."

Interviewing and Selection

Preparations

Adopt a standard reference form to send, with self-addressed, stamped return envelope, to former employers and references given. A phone call may produce a more candid evaluation, and the form can be used during the conversation.

Agree on a standard list of questions to be posed to each candidate. Ask staff for suggestions! Ask only job related questions. It is illegal to ask questions about an applicant's family life or outside interests.

1. Each candidate is asked to respond to the same questions and there is an equal basis for evaluation.
2. The interview proceeds smoothly and only legal, appropriate information is discussed.

Devise a standard evaluation sheet to be used by the interview committee to note the candidate's responses and members' impressions.

Decide if the director will be offered a contract, schedule or open-ended agreement.

Budget for what expenses the board will fund for interviewees. Discuss possible relocation costs. Be sure to inform all invited candidates of the board's policy on these expenses.

Interview and Selection Process

1. Promptly acknowledge receipt of all applications. Notify applicants who do not meet established qualifications.
2. Check references for potential candidate using standard form.
3. Decide on the number of applicants to be interviewed, usually 3-5 people.
4. Determine the order of preference for interviews and send letters to scheduled candidates.
5. Designate one person to conduct interviews with others assisting. Keep the interview team to a reasonable size, usually 3-5 people.

6. Plan the location for the interview, accommodations for the candidate, a tour of the library and community, etc.

7. Allow adequate time for discussion. The interview is a mutual evaluation process. The committee should provide the candidate with a fair, accurate picture of the library, working conditions and expectations.

8. Allow time between interviews to complete evaluation sheets while the members' reactions to candidates are still fresh.

After All Interviews are Completed

Select the best potential director through discussion and by ranking candidates based on interview evaluations. Seek consensus of the committee.

Telephone the top candidate to offer the position and let him/her consider final decision. Follow up with information letter and/or contract which includes details of appointment, duties, salary, benefits, evaluation, starting date, etc. Include a second copy for new director's signature and specify return date.

Write all other candidates interviewed, thanking them and informing them of your decision only after acceptance has been received. If the first choice declines or is unavailable, the board can quickly contact the second choice.

New Director

Orient the new director and assist him/her with relocation. Provide help with school and housing information, and additional information on the library and the community. A subscription to the local newspaper is a valuable tool to acclimate the new library director.

Welcome the new director. News releases and photographic coverage should be arranged. Personal introductions to staff members, trustees, community representatives and local government officials should be scheduled promptly. An open house or reception hosted by the board is a standard courtesy.

A probationary period of six months to one year allows time for the board and the director to develop a working relationship and to evaluate library administration. Early in this period some short- and long-term goals and expectations must be mutually agreed upon.

Midway through the probationary period an informal review of the director's performance should be conducted. A "final" evaluation should be developed by the board and discussed concerning the decision to retain or dismiss the director. If performance is in doubt, problems should be documented carefully. Dissatisfaction should be recorded and discussed. The board should never retain a director if a majority of the members are convinced that no improvement is possible.

If the board finds itself in this position, they should seek help from an outside impartial consultant.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984 published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association, in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Evaluating the Library Director

Boards of trustees are evaluating their library director all the time; by instinct, what they see in the buildings, hear from the public and staff, as well as the "feel" and reputation of the library. The evaluation of the director is closely tied to the success of the annual library plan. A formal, written evaluation is an essential management practice, although a good board member's subjective assessment of the library director is often as accurate. The evaluation of the library director should be the foundation in the evaluation process for the library as a whole.

Purposes of the Performance Evaluation

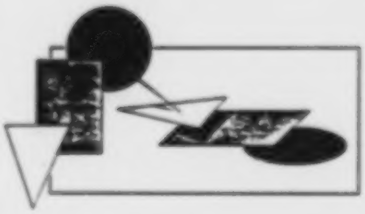
- To provide the director with clear understanding of the board's expectations
- To ensure the director is aware of how well the expectations are being met
- To serve as a formal vehicle of primary communication between the board and director
- To identify and give credit for a job well done
- To identify the board's actual concerns so that appropriate action can be taken
- To wrap up status reports on annual accomplishments of the library and insure the continued effectiveness of the director
- To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to municipal officials and the community

Methods of Evaluation

To be effective, the evaluation method and process must be designed to accommodate your specific local situation. There is not any single perfect evaluation system and the evaluation process should be a continuous activity. There are three basic methods, each with advantages and disadvantages. A combinations of the following is generally most effective:

Based on personality and behavior traits. This method is perhaps the most limited type of evaluation. These traits can contribute to successful management but the standards of performance and expectations are not usually defined clearly. A numerical rating scale is often used with this type of evaluation. Evaluation based on traits is sometimes used because it is short and simple. The board must remember the time and energy spent on the evaluation process is the cornerstone of future library service. Examples of traits include cooperation, initiative, dependability, creativity, communication, motivation, attention to detail, decision-making ability, and so forth. If a board is going to use this type of evaluation, it should be able to cite specific incidents that display the director's strengths and weaknesses in each trait.

Based on job description. A detailed job description is essential in the hiring of a library director. It is also an excellent place to begin, even if the library director has been working for many years. The board should review and revise the job description (if there is one) with the current director. The major areas of responsibility noted in the job description can be expanded in detail to form the criteria for evaluation.



Based on objectives. This method is also directly related to the job description and the library plan. The board and the library director develop mutually agreed upon objectives to be accomplished within a specific time frame. Using this method, the evaluation is based objectively on accomplishments rather than on a subjective appraisal of personalities. The objectives are basically a part of the planning process. It is important to clearly define the objectives, actions, responsibility, time frame, etc. so the objectives are measurable.

Developing the Evaluation Process Based on Objectives

- Board and director jointly develop a list of factors that lend themselves to an objective evaluation.
- Board develops general evaluation method, criteria, rating scale and form. Board and director identify goals, long range plans and specific areas that need attention.
- Director prepares a set of objectives with time line. Board reviews objectives, suggests changes, if appropriate.
- Board and director negotiate changes in objectives.
- Objectives are written and confirmed.
- Director handles implementation of actions to meet objectives, including delegation of tasks to staff.
- Periodic report by director to board on progress toward achieving objectives monthly and annually.
- Revisions to objectives are negotiated between board and director as needed.
- Annual formal evaluation review.
- Periodic feedback from the board to the director.
- Process repeated.

Expectations and Evaluation

Directors are accountable to varied and sometimes conflicting constituencies. The board and the director must recognize these groups and agree on the priority of the demands of each.

- Elected officials and the appointed governing officer who supervises other municipal department heads.
- The library staff members who have diverse personal expectations for their director.
- Public pressure groups who exert pressure on the director to respond to their concerns.
- Individual members of the board of trustees who have personal priorities for the library and the director.

Good communication, public relations, a written plan and clear policies will all help the board and director to deal with any conflicting expectations. The evaluation method and process can be designed to include input from all these groups, but the final responsibility rests with the board.

The Evaluation Meeting

Assuming the library board and the director have reached a mutual understanding of the evaluation format and process, the following steps and approach are recommended:

1. An annual formal evaluation should be adequate.
2. The evaluation should be a positive, developmental process that includes praise and constructive guidance.
3. The board should review annual reports submitted by the director documenting accomplishments of the library (based on library plan, job descriptions, objectives, etc.) and other relevant information should be obtained as needed.
4. The board members should meet without the director present to formulate the written evaluation. They should reach a consensus on how they, as a body, rate the director on each item.
5. The board should develop definitions of their ratings and standards so they have a common understanding and are able to communicate these to others.

6. The board's written evaluation should be given to the director and then discussed with him or her at a board meeting. This meeting may be held in executive session if considered necessary by the board or the director.

7. The meeting should be conducted in a business like manner but should not be so austere as to be intimidating.

8. Adequate time should be allowed to thoroughly explore all issues and the meeting should be free of interruptions.

9. The evaluation should be presented objectively, specific examples should be used to illustrate the evaluation and free discussion should be allowed.

10. The baord should assiduously avoid either an accusatory or apologetic tone.

11. There should be a thorough summing-up of the proceedings by a board spokesperson .

12. The evaluation should be followed with a planning session to develop the basis for the next review.

Factors in Evaluating Library Directors

The following are some factors that could be considered in evaluating the library director. They are not all-inclusive. There are in all probability several factors that each of you could add and some factors included that you may consider irrelevant. These factors are a reference point for you to develop the type of evaluation that is best for your institution and your situation.

I. Preparing and Managing the Budget

To what degree:

A. Is all the necessary staff work completed in a timely manner prior to presentation to the board?

B. Does the budget cover all necessary expenses?

C. Are funds allocated or reserved for unanticipated contingencies?

D. Are the funds effectively allocated?

E. Are mid-course corrections minimized?

II. Managing Staff

To what degree:

A. Are positive management/staff relations maintained?

B. Are fair and equitable policies proposed for board adoption and then fairly administered?

C. Are there grievances filed? If so, what is their nature?

III. Professional State-Of-The Art Awareness

A. Are innovative methods of service delivery, technical processes, etc., studied thoroughly; implemented only after they fit the needs of the institution, and are proven to be cost effective?

B. Does the director maintain an adequate knowledge of the current state-of-the-art?

C. Is the staff encouraged, aided and abetted in maintaining an awareness of technological advances in the profession?

D. Conversely, how prone is the director to adopting change for the sake of change?

IV. Collection Development

A. How adequate is the library's program of determining user needs/wants and translating these into acquisitions and services?

B. Have adequate criteria been established to enable the library to react systematically to materials budget cuts?

V. Implementation of Board Decisions

A. Are board decisions implemented on a timely basis?

B. Once a decision has been made, does the director back board decisions (to what extent?) or are they sometimes presented to staff in an apologetic or deprecatory manner?

VI. Use of the Library

A. How effectively are the services of the library communicated to the public?

B. Is a proper and realistic balance established between promotion of services and budget constraints?

C. Are circulation trends and in-house use adequately analyzed and are there appropriate reactions to the results of such analyses?

D. How adequate is communication to the public regarding new services?

VII. Development of Staff

A. Are potential managers identified, encourage to develop and assisted in their development of career goals?

B. Are internal candidates for promotion competitive with outside candidates for management positions?

C. Does the director adequately justify the need for staff development funds, actively campaign for such funds and adequately account for the use of such funds?

D. How well is cross-training utilized to provide adequate service to the public?

VIII. Utilization of Staff

A. Is there a clear separation of professional and clerical tasks for staff guidance?

B. Have peak service hours been identified and staff deployed accordingly?

C. Are functions analyzed periodically with the objective of combining, eliminating and/or creating new positions?

IX. Community Development

A. How active is the director in the community?

B. Is the incumbent "visible" to large segments of the population?

C. Is the director available for speaking engagements in the community?

X. Activity in Professional Organizations

A. Is the library represented and does the director actively participate in ALA, PNLA, ILA, etc.?

B. Does the director hold office in professional organizations?

C. Do the staff and the director have published articles in professional journals?

XI. Policy Recommendations to Board

A. Is adequate staff work completed prior to presentation to the board?

B. Are reasonable alternatives recommended?

C. Are policy recommendations generally proactive rather than reactive?

D. Are policy recommendations usually necessary and appropriate to the efficient operation of the library?

XII. Friends of the Library

A. Has the director actively promoted the formation and/or maintenance of a Friends group?

B. Do the director and staff provide adequate support to the Friends organization?

C. Has the director delineated and/or helped define the role of the Friends group?

D. Has the Friends group had adequate explanation of its role in relationship to the role of the board?

XIII. Maintenance and Construction of Physical Plants

A. Within the imposed budgetary constraints are the buildings and grounds adequately maintained?

B. Does the director have an ongoing program that provides adequate information on the need for new and/or remodeled facilities?

C. Are new and/or remodeled facilities functionally appropriate and aesthetically pleasing?

D. Are new and/or remodeled facilities constructed within budget allocations?

XIV. Establishing Priorities

A. Are the director's recommended priorities in concert with the library's mission as defined by the board?

B. Do these priorities appropriately reflect community needs?

C. Are priorities established proactively or reactively?

XV. Staff Selection

A. Is staff selection accomplished at appropriate supervisory levels and with adequate use of staff resources?

B. Is adequate emphasis placed on Equal Opportunity Employer/ Affirmative Action and is the director's commitment to these principles communicated to the staff?

XVI. Short-Range And Long-Range Planning

A. To what degree do the director's short-range and long-range plans reflect board priorities?

B. Are the short-range and long-range plans updated on a continuous basis to reflect changing circumstances?

C. Do the director's accomplishments reflect and relate to the short-range and long-range plans?

D. Are the short-range and long-range plans flexible enough to allow for exigent circumstances?

E. Does the director provide adequate information to the board on the implementation, revision, etc., of short-range and long-range planning?

XVII. Miscellaneous Rating Factors

A. Are "hard decisions" made and implemented or are they deferred or ignored?

B. Does the director display adequate initiative or rather merely react to exigencies?

C. Is the director objective in making the necessary decisions or do personal prejudices intrude too often?

D. Is the director consistent in decisions that affect the staff and/or public?

E. Is the director open with the board or does a "hidden" agenda intrude too often into the relationship?

F. Does the director "set an example" for the staff through professional conduct, high principles, business-like approach etc.?

Adapted from the *Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984*, *published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.*

A Note About Trustee and Staff Relations

Trustees should accept these principles:

A. The staff is directed only by the library director, who interprets policies to the staff and carries out the total library program as accepted by the board.

B. Trustees should never give orders or instructions to the staff.

C. Trustees should go directly to the library director in case of any comment on the performance of staff.

D. Trustees should never interfere in the hiring process other than to agree to job descriptions and personnel policies.

E. The board is a final recourse for employees who have exhausted normal appeals channels.

Library directors should recognize these situations:

A. Trustees often know staff members very well and have a friendship relationship.

B. Trustees will ask for help from staff members they know and will bypass others.

C. Trustees answer to the community and are sometimes under great pressure from constituents to hire or to fire certain persons.

D. Trustees should not be insulated from staff but should know the positions and the programs. The library director should provide opportunities for trustees to be acquainted with the staff.

E. The director should insist on proper channels for complaints.

The library's policies should include:

A. A provision for determining and reviewing staff manual provisions and gaining staff input on hours, salaries, benefits, etc.

B. Provision for adequate reporting from the library director on human resource problems.

Sample Evaluation Form

Library Director ______________________________

Assistant Librarian ______________________________

Performance Review

Instructions:

You are asked to rate certain **performance elements**. After each rating is a space for your explanation. Use specific examples of employee performance and make suggestions for improvement where appropriate.

O - Outstanding: Employee's work in this element is excellent and exceeds expected performance levels.

H - Highly Proficient: Employee's work in this element is highly satisfactory and somewhat exceeds expected performance levels.

S - Satisfactory: Employee's work in this element is acceptable and meets expected performance levels.

B - Barely Acceptable: Employee's work in this elements is less than satisfactory though not totally unacceptable.

U - Unsatisfactory: Employee's work in this element is deficient and does not meet minimum performance levels.

Performance Elements

Skill In:

O H S B U

1. Planning, organizing and establishing priorities for work.
   Explanation:
   ____
   ____
   ____

O H S B U

2. Gathering and reporting information.
   Explanation:
   ____
   ____
   ____

3. Adapting to changing situations and priorities. O H S B U
Explanation:

4. Identifying problems and recommending solutions. O H S B U
Explanation:

5. Making decisions. O H S B U
Explanation:

6. Oral and written communications. O H S B U
Explanation:

7. Overall Performance. O H S B U

** Please initial this form if you would like to have it returned to you with the compilation.

Some Important Employment Laws

Although we cannot cover in detail the all of the employment laws that might affect your library, we will give you a short list of important laws and what they do. These descriptions are not intended to fully explain the law, but to send up some "warning signals" of areas that you should be concerned about.

Minimum Wage -- Federal And State. Almost all library workers will fall under these minimum wage laws. Make sure that you are paying them at minimum wage or more.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This includes the federal minimum wage, and it also lists requirements for overtime pay and compensatory (comp) time. It also prohibits employees from contributing volunteer hours doing the same thing that they get paid for.

The Fair Labor Standards Act also includes child labor provisions, which set certain limitations on the use of juveniles as employees. If you use students under 18 years of age as pages, you should be aware of these restrictions.

State and Federal Civil Rights Laws prohibit employers from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, in hiring, promotion, and other employment policies.

Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA) prohibits employers from discriminating on account of age. The protected age group is 40 years old and older.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) strengthens prohibitions on discrimination against the disabled and requires employers to make their facilities accessible to the disabled and to make reasonable changes in their accommodations for the employment of disabled people.

Immigration Reform and Control Act requires that employees complete a I-9 form within three days of starting work, verifying their identity and authorization to work. Employers may condition an offer of employment on the successful applicant's completing the form, but may not specify what documents must be used to complete the form.

Prohibited Conduct By Public Servants. Idaho Code 18-1351 and 18-1359 to 18-1362 lists prohibited conduct on the part of Idaho public servants. One of the prohibitions is against nepotism, the hiring and employment of a person's relatives.

Tips for Directors

1. Give all trustees prior knowledge of agenda items.
2. Be sure all board packets are delivered on the same day.
3. Discuss key issues informally before meeting, either by phone or in person.
4. Be sure the individual communications are well-written and avoid jargon.
5. Give the same information to all trustees.
6. Make recommendations.
7. Avoid surprises.
8. Do not embarrass trustees in public or in private.
9. Keep the faith with your trustees, individually and collectively.
10. When there are divided opinions on your administrative staff as to some proposed policy, etc., do not hesitate to share those views with the board.

Tips for Boards Members

1. Attend all meetings.
2. Be prepared. Study the issues before the meeting.
3. Do not embarrass the staff in public.
4. Tell the director and staff how they are doing.
5. Recognize that the directors and staff do not have all the time in the world to prepare a board packet and to prepare for a meeting.
6. Accept some responsibility for your own continuing education as a trustee.
7. When you ask for extra reports and detailed analysis, do so with the recognition of the cost of such report preparation and analysis.
8. Recognize that twelve board meetings a year are insufficient for a board to address the policy needs of a library. Be receptive to the conduct of special study sessions.

Trustee Self-assessment: Staff Relations

Yes	No	
☐	☐	1. Our board has a written job description for all personnel positions.
☐	☐	2. Our board evaluates the library director annually.
☐	☐	3. I recognize the difference in the role of the library director and my role as a trustee.
☐	☐	4. Our board has written personnel policies.
☐	☐	5. Our board has a grievance procedure for staff complaints.

Trustees and Automation

Introduction

Over the last 30 years, computers have become an important part of our lives. Computer software looks very different from the days when practically every user had to be a programmer in order to use computer technology.

Libraries played a quiet, but significant, role in the development of the industry which puts computers and information together in innovative ways. Today's libraries take full advantage of those developments to make life easier. In particular, they provide patrons with better information, more complete information, or information that was unavailable before the widespread availability of the computer.

What role does the computer play in the library environment?

- People use a variety of tools to complete a job. The computer is a tool. On one level it is no different from a pen, a typewriter, or an electric eraser. You do your work with it, around it, through it, and without it.

- It is appropriate for certain tasks, inappropriate for others. It is not an end-all, or a be-all. Its applicability is definitely limited by the task to be accomplished, the power built into the computer and appropriate software.

So why should libraries use a computer? In other words, why automate?

- Computers can be used to make a repetitive job easier.

- By using computers and telephones, libraries can expand the boundaries of their collections to become as big as all the libraries in the state, region, or nation.

What products are available for libraries to use? There are numerous computer software products which make running a library easier. Libraries can choose from three basic types of electronic products:

- General purpose programs such as word processors, database managers, and spreadsheets

- Software programs designed specifically for libraries

- Information published on electronic media, like compact discs, instead of paper

Trustees and Automation

Word processing software can be used by library staff for day-to-day correspondence; form letters and requests; handbooks and policy statements (selection policy, user manuals, staff procedure guides); requisitions and/or purchase orders; and bibliographies. Uses for **database management software** include inventory (e.g., AV equipment, software collections, special holdings); film bookings; union serial lists/periodical check-in; consideration files/book orders; and bibliographies. Ways to use **spreadsheet software** include budget management; fund accounting; circulation statistics; library use statistics; interlibrary loan/system/state statistics; and orders (especially supply).

Areas in a library which lend themselves to the use of **library specific software** include the purchase of books, cataloging, circulation, and a computerized version of a library's card catalog. LaserCat is an example of a program designed specifically for library use. Libraries use the CD-ROM product to find information about the books they want to buy. They use that same information to make cards for their card catalog. Libraries are also able to determine who owns a book not in their collection. In most cases the library can borrow the book from the library that owns it.

Publishers are producing information in new media forms. Some of these forms require the use of a computer to make them available to the patrons. One example is the use of CD-ROM technology to publish encyclopedias combining text, pictures, and sound. Computer software aids adults developing literacy skills. Information accessible via the Internet expands the potential of a library's collection.

The Changing Environment

Idaho's library community began establishing the foundations of an interconnected network of libraries in the state during the 1970's. This network of libraries is decentralized and is made up of multi-type organizations, cooperative ventures, and regional networks. These library groups work collaboratively in order to share resources, locally, regionally, and statewide.

Resource sharing is necessary because no single library can collect, organize, and distribute the total collection of resources available at all libraries. Each Idaho library has a major stake in sharing resources and in the provision of statewide library services which:

- Are uniformly available to all citizens of the state through their appropriate local library,
- Provide access to the collective information resources held in the state's libraries, and
- Support and enhance the local library in its ability to provide these services through the sharing of resources.

The Internet provides the technological infrastructure which ties this network of libraries together in Idaho. Library staff use the Internet to find information for patrons, borrow books from other libraries in the state, and communicate with their professional colleagues statewide. Library patrons can use computer workstations in many of the public libraries to find information which has been made available via the Internet including publications housed in other Idaho public and academic libraries.

Every public library in Idaho should have in its collection a copy of a videotape entitled *Idaho's Information Highway*. It describes networking and resource sharing projects in the state. Each library should also have a copy of *Idaho's Network of Libraries; A Statewide Plan for Multi-Type Library Cooperation and Resource Sharing*. These two publications provide a picture for the long term vision of networking among libraries in the state. Resource sharing often requires the use of technology and each local public library needs to consider its automation needs in order to gain access to the ever-evolving information infrastructure in Idaho and nationally.

The Role and Responsibilities of the Library Trustee

Trustees relate the library and its programs to the community and its needs. The full scope of their roles and responsibilities are described in other sections of this guide. During the automation planning process, trustees work with the library director to determine how automation can be used to support the goals and objectives of the library. They also work with the library director to formulate a budget adequate to carry out the automation project. This process may include seeking additional funding. Other activities include:

- Be aware of and make use of the services and consultants of the Idaho State Library.
- Attend workshops and meetings when possible to learn about new library technologies.
- Make possible continuing education for the training of staff in the use of new technologies.
- Read articles.
- Visit other libraries who have already automated the library operations under consideration.

Planning for Automation

The most important component of any change or alteration in local library practice, is a commitment to planning that change. The implementation of a computer project can often be made more difficult than it needs to be by:

- Insufficient or inadequate planning
- Lack of familiarity with computer tools
- Reliance on vendor information

Planning involves four elements:

- Identifying needs
- Establishing goals, objectives, and activities
- Implementing the project
- Evaluating performance

Above all in the planning process for automation, it is critical to address the needs of the people who use the library.

Why an automation plan?

Planning provides a powerful means to better allocate existing resources, identify service priorities, demonstrate accountability, and accomplish stated objectives. If a library is going to automate, a plan for automation should be part of the library's general long-range plan

Developing a long-range plan for automation provides the means for a library board, library administration, staff, and community members to reach a common agreement. It defines the goals and objectives of the library:

- in the area of services to its public, and
- the usage of automation and technology to support those services.

Critical Resources

What are some of the critical resources to consider when dealing with automation?

Planning:

- The key to effective use of computer technology is planning. It is difficult for the staff to select the right system when they are told on a Friday afternoon that they have a given amount of money to spend by Monday.
- Be sure to have a mission and roles defined for the library. Look at how computer technology can support that mission or roles.
- What are the library's priorities?

Time:

- The amount of time it takes to successfully implement computer technology will almost always be longer than expected. The hardware and software will not always arrive on schedule. They might not work properly the first time. The suppliers will not always be as helpful as they could be.
- The staff will need time to learn how to use the software and hardware.
- Remember that the staff has other jobs with which they must deal in order to keep the library functioning.
- When planning for an automation project, be sure enough time is allocated to deal with situations as they arise.
- Be sure the project goals and objectives are realistic for the allocated time.

Money:

- Computer technology costs money. While the amount of money required to automate is much less than it was 10 years ago, it is still a significant and ongoing cost.
- Does the library have the budget to make a long term commitment to computer technology? Are you interested in re-evaluating the library's budget to make that commitment?

Effort:

- It takes people to make computers work.

Needs Assessment

Before considering the purchase of computer technology it is important to assess the needs of the library as they relate to the services provided to the public. There are a number of ways to determine those needs. These can include:

- Staff surveys
- Patron and nonpatron surveys
- Staff sessions where all possible ideas are expressed
- Board surveys
- Service assessment
- Collection usage assessment

Some measures worth exploring while identifying the library's needs include:

- Number of registered borrowers
- Number of items circulated
- Number of titles acquired in a year
- Number of titles in the collection

Examples of identified needs might be:

- There is a three-month backlog in filing catalog cards and a four-month backlog in processing newly purchased books and video tapes.

- Circulation has been increasing roughly 30 percent each year. The manual system is bogging down, and it is increasingly more difficult to check out books and videotapes to the patrons. There is a two-month backlog in sending out lost book notices, and overdue notices have not been sent out.

- The manual system to order new books is slow and cumbersome. Staff frequently order items more than once. They do not have a clear idea of how much money has been encumbered for the purchase of new books.

A needs analysis does not necessarily have to be done by a computer specialist when a library is looking at the use of computer technology. In fact, the library staff can perform a competent job, provided that they have access to technical resources.

The needs analysis is based on a comprehensive review of the existing system in the library. It seeks to determine and document the information flow among and between activities; i.e., what really happens in the library.

Much of the benefit of a needs analysis comes from understanding what is currently going on and making needed improvements. The benefits realized from the introduction of a computer system are often secondary. Through a needs analysis the decision may even be made not to automate.

Goals and Objectives

Before beginning an automation project it is important to have clearly defined roles and a mission statement for the library. Public library roles are profiles of library service emphasis. Each role is a shorthand way of describing a combination of factors important in planning:

- What the library is trying to do
- Who the library is trying to serve
- What resources the library needs to achieve these ends

The mission statement should express briefly and directly the library's purpose and service priorities for the current planning cycle.

- It builds on, but is not limited to, the roles chosen for emphasis.

- It implies criteria for evaluating the library's overall performance and, by implication, it indicates areas the library will not emphasize.

The goals, objectives, and activities section is actually the "meat and potatoes" of an automation plan.

- Goals come from the roles and mission statement. They are long-range, broad, general statements describing a desired condition or future toward which the library will work during the next 3-5 years.

- Objectives quantify the goals into measurable results that can be achieved in a specific time period.

- Activities or tasks are those things that need to be accomplished to achieve the objectives and ultimately the goal.

- Technological implications represent the computer and software necessary to make an automation project happen.

So You Want to Automate; or a Sample Goal and Objective?

Goal:

The library will have efficient circulation procedures for materials.

Objective: By the end of 1998, the library will be able to process 95% of its overdue materials no later than seven days after the due date.

Activity:

By July, 1997, the library will have conducted a needs assessment of its circulation system.

Task:

By August, 1997, the library will have determined whether to maintain a manual system or to automate.

Technological implications:

The decision will be made whether to review systems which are microcomputer-based rather than mini-computer-based.

Activity:

By September, 1997, the librarian and board representatives will have visited library sites operating the circulation system products of at least three different vendors.

Activity:

By September, 1997, the librarian will have defined the characteristics required in a circulation system.

Vendors and Consultants...What to Expect

Vendors

Think of the vendor like you would an auto salesperson. Remember that vendors are in business primarily to make money. The people to whom you will be talking are trying to sell you their product. They will tell you only about the good features of their systems, not their drawbacks. Remember, the vendor is not, and should not be, a pal. If a system has to be "brought in" for repairs, the last thing librarians need to worry about is offending a "buddy's" feelings.

Vendor support is critical to any automation project.

- How fast will they repair or replace hardware?
- Are they helpful when a library has software problems?
- Do they help with the maintenance of the system?
- Are there hidden costs that they don't tell you about?
- Are they a stable business that is likely to be around in five years?

To find out about how well a vendor supports its system, contact other libraries that have used the vendor.

Consultants

It is a good idea to consider involving a consultant.

- Beware of consultants who do not ask questions about the institution, the library, the library's automated system, or any other questions that might establish a local context.

- Beware of consultants who make recommendations without really considering the implications of the recommendations. Even a purely "technical" consultant has to consider organizational and operational issues.

- Understand the difference between a technical consultant and an organization/operational consultant and do not automatically assume that a consultant in one capacity can give good advice in the other area.

- Beware of the salesperson masquerading as a consultant.

- Check the consultant's background and beware of "canned solutions."

The Test Drive

If you are buying a small automation system, use the same approach you would use to buy any large-ticket item. Buying a car is a good example.

- Take a needs list hammered out by library staff.
- Look at the vendor's list of product functions, where warranties and capacities are spelled out. Do they match your needs list?
- Be satisfied with the basic product first and then negotiate for options.
- If your library is the only one with a fancy modification, Murphy's Law determines that the person who invented it will quit the company and no one else will know how to fix it.
- If it turns out the vendor doesn't have a basic product that matches your needs, leave the store.
- If there is nothing out there that is exactly right or at the right price, leave the store.
- If overwhelmed, take a breather. Then go out in the field again as a good consumer.
- Don't be the vendor's pal. Get what you need for your library.
- Don't be hurried into a decision. Take your time. Remember you will have to live with your system for a long time.
- Be aware of the implications of using a vendor's standard contract. Negotiate your own, and have it checked out by your library's lawyer.

If you are planning a large automated system, you may need to write detailed specifications and go through a request for proposal (RFP) process.

- An RFP provides all computer vendors with general information about the library. Detailed and precise specifications for the desired product, such as computer hardware, are known. It also includes the rules and conditions governing the purchase of the desired system.

- A number of vendors are asked to bid on the project. The decision-making process ensures that each vendor meets or exceeds all of the specifications and simply awards the contract to the low bidder.

- If you are planning a large automated system, write a contract with the vendor. Don't use a vendor's standard contract. Negotiate your own, and have it checked out by your library's lawyer.

The approach you use in actually buying a system will depend on your library and the policies of your governing board. Be aware of your responsibilities, and above all, negotiate the best possible system for your library's needs.

Checklist

Remember how much other work the staff has to do to keep the library operating on a daily basis. Consider carefully how many automation projects the staff takes on at a time.

When the staff does not know what can be realistically expected from an automation project it is difficult to judge success. Objectives do not need to be elaborate. Be clear about what the project should achieve.

Identify priorities.

Know when a project is successful, and when to make changes in order to succeed.

Work from the ground up.

- Start simple with computer projects. Add programs and services as skill and understanding are achieved.
- Dealing with computers will always be a juggling act, so make certain that the first ball is in the air before others are added.

Automation projects that fail usually do so because of neglect.

- Sometimes the library administration may not see the value of a project and consequently gives inadequate support or the wrong signals to the support staff trying to work on the project.
- The library staff may refuse to become involved in anything but foot dragging.
- Members of the staff may change therefore affecting the continuity of the project.
- Someone on the staff has to stay close to an automation project on a daily basis.

Personal computing means personal involvement.

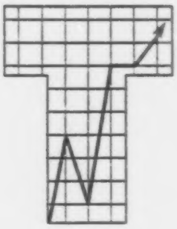
- The person involved in managing the project needs to have adequate time to learn how the computer operates. That staff member does not need to learn high-level programming, but does need to learn how to use programs and to manage the computer's operating system!

- Staff training is an important part of automation and gives the staff a realistic basis for planning for automation.

The library needs to assign someone to the project who is enthusiastic. Find rewards for that individual as things progress.

The total expenditures for the project on an annual basis should be equal to the total projected income for the project on an annual basis. A budget/ financial statement will have three basic sections:

- Pre-Contract/Pre-Installation Costs
- Up-Front/Installation Costs
- Operational/Ongoing costs



Develop a time line for the project.

Understand that automation projects funded with grant monies will necessarily have to fit their immediate time line to the grant cycle. That does not preclude setting the project within a longer time line for an overall automation plan.

Make sure the physical facilities are adequate. Lighting, noise levels, electrical power sources, and telephone access are critical resources.

Software is central to the project. Decide what the project needs to achieve. Then find the software that will do those necessary tasks.

Remember that automating a manual system is not necessarily the most efficient use of a computer.

- Sometimes the way tasks are done has to change in order to effectively utilize the capabilities of the computer.

Hardware rules are simple. Pick software to do the job first. Then select the correct computer that will support the software and therefore the job.

Carefully select a computer that will handle software and necessary storage capacity for at least three years.

The industry is changing rapidly. For example, what is a common work-horse now may be a dinosaur shortly and not be capable of running the newest software. Depending on your library and how you choose your equipment, you may well be able to make that equipment last longer.

Check out your potential vendor before you buy.

Trustees and Automation

Most important: control the project. If control is lost, the project will quickly disintegrate.

- Staffing, proper physical arrangement of equipment, and ability to obtain results from the software and hardware producers are critical to maintaining control over automation.

Don't become dependent on an in-house "computer guru." Make sure at least two staff members are familiar with the system. If only one person knows about the system, what will happen if that person leaves?

Publicize the project appropriately. Show patrons what they can expect to gain from the automation project.

Planning for the future.

- Decide what worked and what did not work. Determine what would be done differently next time. Understand which services cannot be provided.
- Look at the library's budget.
- Look at new services that might be offered. Be willing to experiment and try new things even if they do not work this time.
- Examine new technology.

Stick to the basics of librarianship. Listen to the patrons. They can help make things work.

Trustees and Automation

Trustee Self-Assessment: Automation

Yes	No	
☐	☐	1. Our board evaluates the library's automation needs once a year.
☐	☐	2. Our collection development policy deals with publications now appearing in electronic format such as compact discs, computer software, and the Internet.
☐	☐	3. The building plan allows for computer technology.
☐	☐	4. We have considered the use of computer technology to access resources on a statewide, regional, and national basis using the Internet.
☐	☐	5. We are aware of appropriate output measures which will help us determine when the use of a computer would make library operations more efficient for the available staff time and library budget.

More Information

There are user groups, consultants, and hundreds of books and journal articles that will help to implement computer technology in your library. The Idaho State Library can help identify appropriate publications dealing with automation.

Trustees and Community Relations

Introduction

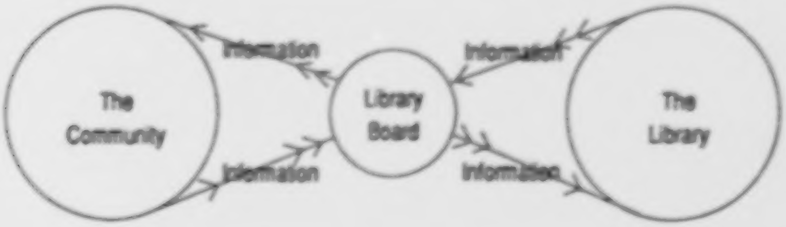
The public library board is a major conduit of information between the library and its community. Thus the library board has two separate, but related, functions in relationship to its community.

- It represents the needs and desires of the community to the library staff.

and

- It represents the needs of the library to the community.

These functions are illustrated by the following diagram.

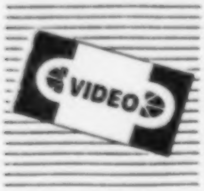

The Community
Information
Information
Library Board
Information
Information
The Library

If the board fails to pass information in either direction, then it is failing to do this part of its job.

Materials in this section of the manual, will give information on both sides of this relationship.

Representing the Library

One side of the library board's responsibility in community relations is to represent the library to the community. This means that board members should be thoroughly familiar with the library. In fact, outside of the library staff, no one in the community should know the library better than its board members.



Here are some tips on how to get to know your library:

1. **Use your library!** There is no better way for a board member to get to know the library than to actually use its services.
2. **Ask questions.** Even a small library is a complex organization. It is not easy to understand everything that goes on in it. If you don't ask questions, you will never get the real reasons behind how things are done.
3. **Read your minutes.** If you are a new board member, read the board minutes for the past five years. These will tell you the major issues that have been discussed, as well as give a picture of the budget and other important fiscal information.
4. **Attend continuing education activities.** Activities for both board members and for library staff can be useful, as they can give you new perspectives and ideas for your library, and they will help you to see the "big picture" of librarianship and how your library fits into it.
5. **Visit other libraries.** Cooperation between libraries is becoming an increasingly important part of library services. Your understanding of how other libraries operate will help you to develop programs for cooperation for your library.

Getting the Message Out

Once you know about the library, it is important to get that information out to the community.

Here are some tips on ways to tell the public about the library:

1. **Bring up the library as a topic of conversation.** Informally tell your friends and acquaintances about library services.

2. **With the library director, visit with groups**, such as service clubs, to make a presentation about the library.

3. **If you are a city library, the board and director should make an annual report** to the city council on library services.

   This should be done at a time when the library is not asking for anything from the council.

4. **If you are a city library, the board make the annual budget presentation** with the library director.

Some Tips on How to Talk About the Library

1. **Speak to your listener's interests, not your own.** It will do the library little good, for example, if when you are speaking to someone who is interested in hunting and fishing, you talk about the library's fine collection of sewing books.

2. **Don't give out false information.** Make sure of your facts. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the person that you will find the answer and get back to them.

3. **Don't assume that your listener knows more than s/he does.** Don't use library jargon.

4. **Make sure you listen as well as talk.**

5. **Be positive about the library.** Don't air the library's dirty linen in public. If you don't like something the library is doing, take it to the library director or board. When a board member says something negative about the library, it gives a very poor impression of both the library and the board member. Remember that your purpose is to promote the library.

Representing the Community

Because the library board represents the community, its membership should be representative of the community. Ideally, the membership of the board should include both men and women, young and old, rich and poor. If there is a significant minority population in the community, they should be represented. If the library board has input on who will be appointed to it, these factors should be considered.

However, for a number of reasons, the ideal library board representation is rarely achieved. When this occurs, it is up to the board members to seek out the needs and opinions of those who are not represented. How can this be done? Here are few suggestions.

1. **Visit with individual members of the unrepresented group.** If there are no men on the board, for example, board members should talk to their husbands, sons, and male friends about library services and reading. Ask them what they like to read and what kind of information they need to carry out their vocational and recreational activities.

2. **Visit groups that are made up of the unrepresented.** For example, if the board does not have any members who are parents of school age children, board members might want to accompany the library director on a visit with the PTA or other parent group to see how the library might more adequately serve these people.

3. **Visit with the professionals who work with the unrepresented group.** Typically, library boards have few poor people on them, for example. The needs of the poor can be determined, however, if someone from the county welfare department or the ministerial association is asked to address the board. These are people who deal with the problems of the poor on a day-to-day basis, and who might have some ideas about how the library could serve them.

4. **Take a walk around your community for the expressed purpose of looking at the community.** Frequently, we are so involved in our own lives and concerns that we fail to see important things right in front of our eyes. A good project for your library board could be to walk around the town as a group to see what is going on. When groups do this, they are often surprise not only by how much they don't know about their community, but also by the different perspectives that other board members bring to the same facts.

5. **If the board has the time or money, they may also carry out a more formal study of their community.** This involves gathering statistical information, visiting with a wide variety of community agencies and opinion leaders, and writing a formal document that gives community information.

Such studies can be very useful, but should not be taken on lightly. They are a lot of work. More information on this kind of study will be found in the section on planning.

The Importance of Objectivity

Gathering community information is not enough, however. It is also important to put this information to use. This requires that board members look beyond their own interests and opinions to consider the interests and opinions of others. Here are some hints on how this can be done:

1. **Listen, listen, and listen some more.**

2. **Never go into a board discussion with your mind made up.** If you have strong feelings about a particular issue, make sure you spend more time listening than talking when the issue is discussed.

3. **Review all policies annually, and more often if the need arises.** Policies are not written in stone, but should change as the needs of the community change.

4. **Consider every decision you make from the perspective of those who are not represented on the board.** For example, if the library decides not to buy paperbacks, how will this affect young adults, who typically do not like hardback books, and who are excluded from serving on the board by their age?

5. **Be willing to change.** Look for ways to make the library more appealing for those who are not currently using it, while at the same time remembering the needs of the more traditional users.

A Written Policy Eliminates Problems

A written public relations policy will preclude misunderstandings and prevent problems arising. Among points which should be clarified:

- Respective public relations responsibilities of the library director and the library trustees. This will set out how they work cooperatively so the right hand, in effect, knows what the left hand is doing, and the information each may be transmitting to the public is not a variance.
- Procedure for board approval before any major public relations campaign.
- Media contact procedures.
- Official spokesperson for the library board (generally the chairperson/president).
- Any clearance procedures prior to member speeches, statements representing board position, etc.
- For city libraries, the procedure for alerting the city council about information to be made public by the board before publication, radio or TV airing, or announcement to any community groups. (Courtesy and good working relationships with the city council suggest this procedure.) Another reason: The media may well contact one or more members of the city council for comments, so there logically is a "need to know."

Every trustee should have a copy of the public relations policy in his or her trustee manual. The library director should have a copy, the governing body be informed of the policy, and a copy put on file available to the public.

Adapted from Trustee Tool Kit for Library Leadership, published by The California State Library, 1987.

Sample Public Relations Policy

In recognition of the ____________ Library's responsibility to maintain continuing communication with present and potential users of the library's services and resources so as to assure effective and maximum usage by all citizens, the Board of Trustees of the ____________ Library adopts the following resolution as policy.

The goals of the ______________ Library's public relations program are:

- to promote community awareness of library service
- to stimulate interest in and usage of the _____________ Library
- to develop public interest in and usage of the _____________ Library and its role in the community.

1. An annual plan of specific objectives and activities shall be developed, sufficient funds shall be allocated to carry out the program and the program shall be evaluated periodically throughout the year.

2. Training sessions, workshops and other aids shall be made available to library staff members to assure courteous, efficient and friendly contact with library patrons and the general public.

3. Personal and informational group contacts shall be maintained with government officials, opinion leaders, service clubs, civic associations and other community organizations by library staff and board members.

4. Surveys of the community shall be made as needed to assure the ___________ Library's responsiveness to the interests and needs of all citizens.

5. Local media shall be utilized extensively to keep the public aware of and informed about the __________ Library's resources and services.

6. Newsletters, brochures and other promotional materials shall be produced and distributed through the library regular mailings and other methods of reaching the public.

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Selling the Library

Public relations (or community relations) is a planned program of communication between the library and the community it serves. Public relations has as its goal the influence of opinion through performance to create excellent library service for the public.

Library board members (because of their wide background in community affairs) are usually appointed to act as citizen representatives on the library board by the governing authority. In this role they help plan or recommend library policies that will serve the needs of their communities.

Well-informed board members become effective communicators of the library's goals, programs and services to the community and relay vital citizen input to the library regarding desires and new directions the library should be making to improve library service.

Library board members both individually and collectively can improve the public's knowledge and awareness about the library program by:

- Speaking to various groups, individuals, and organizations —civic, business, professional, and social — about library programs, services, and facilities.
- Determining the community's response to the library and its services, including program suggestions and other improvements, and relaying these ideas back to the director.
- Establishing a public relations policy, developing a planned public relations program, and evaluating the public relations program and public service.
- Employing a library director who is highly motivated to relate to the community and who supports staff training and involvement in the public relations program.
- Making sure that the library is inviting and filled with excellent resources delivered by skilled and courteous staff members.
- Standing up for the library's needs when funding is discussed and as communities do planning for public services.
- Keeping informed of library plans and programs by using the library and learning new library practices and sharing ideas by attending workshops, seminars and visiting other libraries.

- Keeping county and city governing authorities and legislative representatives informed of library progress, needs, and of your continued interest in library matters. Supporting legislation that improves and extends library service.
- Being vocal and visible by letting people know you are a trustee, sharing library programs and developments at every organization meeting you attend.
- Meeting the editor and the radio/TV producers and suggesting cooperation with the library to benefit the community.
- Bringing newer members onto the board and assuring broad community representation on the board.
- Encouraging the development of Friends of the Library, of volunteer programs where suitable, and of stimulating programs and services involving a variety of groups in the community.

The library board member who becomes involved in fulfilling the needs of the library and promotes its goals creates credibility, pride, enthusiasm and awareness for the library.

The library director should foster a network of library communication to the public by doing the following:

- Inform both Friends of the Library and library boards of the mission and goals of the library current status of library services and needs, and the necessity of meeting standards of quality for library service. Keep them informed of current and long range plans of the library and their role in creating a positive outcome.
- Ask the board members and friends what they have heard expressed by fellow citizens to be the community's needs and desires for library service.
- Establish a liaison communication link between the library board, library, and Friends of the Library group(s) so that all are working together and are apprised of the roles and responsibilities of each in effecting the public relations program.
- Relay a list of the library needs to the Friends' group so they can assist the library's program in the most worthwhile way as well as measure their accomplishments in contributing to the total library program.

Adapted with permission from *Florida Public Library Board Manual, 1988*, *published by the State Library of Florida.*

Friends of the Library

Friends of the Library organizations have a definite purpose in helping libraries give the best service possible. Friends' groups extend the circle of contacts in the community begun by library board members. Often, it is from these loyal believers and supporters of libraries that board members are chosen. The Friends extend their great enthusiasm, eagerness, and assistance in a variety of ways.

Friends groups set their own purposes, consistent with the needs of the library. It is the responsibility of the board to work closely with the Friends, encouraging them and informing them of the library's policies and programs. Part of this informational program may be to invite an official observer of the Friends' group to the meetings of the board. In turn, the board should attempt to keep itself informed of upcoming Friends' programs.

Some boards appoint one of their members to act as a liaison to the Friends to coordinate the Friends' programs with the library's plan its policies. The board and every board member individually should make an effort to avoid, even unintentionally, dominating the group. An independent Friends' group that is freely choosing to support the library can be much more effective in gaining widespread community support than one that is acting as a surrogate of the board.

The vital supplementary and supporting role that this concerned group plays in enhancing and enriching the library is reflected in their diverse activities as follows.

- Assisting with services: acting as tour guides within the library; assisting with projects to the handicapped, shut-ins, imprisoned, and hospitalized; clerical help; conducting story hours; developing attractive brochures; purchasing equipment; hosting special functions at the library; landscaping and general maintenance; scholarships and staff development assistance and supplying and arranging exhibits.
- Publicizing the library's services: through Friends' membership drives, informs non-users of library services; draws attention to the library as the educational, recreational, and social focal point of the community; speaks at public meetings and to individuals about the library's services, programs, activities, resources, and needs.
- Raising special funds; author receptions, musical events, house tours, tractor pulls, rodeos, book sales, antique bazaars, art shows, plays.

- Other assistance: legislative communication to city and county governing authorities and state and national legislators; special projects; cultural programs; campaign for a new building or expansion or renovation of an existing building.

Informed Friends' groups and library board members working cooperatively with and through the library director can be of valuable assistance in the total public relations efforts of the library.

Where no Friends of the Library group exists, the board may decide that a Friends' group is needed and be instrumental in organizing such a group. If so, an early understanding of the relationship of the Friends to the board and to the staff can be established, reducing the possibility of later jurisdictional problems.

When Friends volunteer to help the library, it is with assistance and cooperation of the library board, librarian and staff, all of whom should have a part in discussing the needs which might be the subject of work by the Friends. Friends should not expect the staff to have available unlimited time to work on projects; the board and librarian should discuss and determine how much time, money and personnel can be woven into the Friends efforts.

Library boards have legal governing responsibilities, including making policy and recommendations. The librarian carries out the library's policies and has charge of the staff. Friends cooperate with both but interfere with neither. Generally speaking, library staff and board are encouraged to belong to the Friends group.

However, current staff members and board members should not be officers in the Friends group in order to avoid possible conflict of interest allegations.

Organizing Friends' Groups

The library director and board usually decide that a Friends' group is needed. Sometimes, however, interested citizens approach the librarian to suggest formation of a Friends' group. In either case, the library board and library director should be involved in setting forth the guidelines, roles, and structure of the Friends group.

First, the library director develops a small planning committee consisting of: active and concerned patrons, representatives from civic organizations, community leaders, a library board member liaison, the library director, and a cross section of the community.

Trustees and Community Relations

This core planning committee meets to draft the goals, objectives and purpose of the Friends' group. The core committee also makes preliminary arrangements for the first public meeting by deciding the time, length, and place of the first meeting and who to invite. They should make certain a cross section of the community is invited. The should decide who will chair. They should also decide how to announce the meeting: fliers, telephone calls, newspaper, radio, personal contact. And they should determine the meeting's purpose and agenda.

The agenda for the first public meeting might include:

1. Welcome by the library board chair
2. Introduction by the library director
3. Explanation of proposed purpose, goals, and objectives of the organization by the Friends core planning committee
4. Resolution to form the group for a specific purpose and agreement on a subsequent meeting to adopt bylaws, elect officers and form committees.

At the next meeting, action should be taken on:

1. Adoption of bylaws and articles of incorporation, written with the assistance of an attorney knowledgeable of state and federal requirements for non-profit incorporation, tax-exempt status, record keeping, fund distribution, and reporting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Naming of standing committees to include: membership, fundraising, program, public relations, legislation, and special projects.
4. Dues structure and membership period.
5. Meeting schedule and program planning.

Adapted with permission from *Florida Public Library Board Manual, 1988,* *published by the State Library of Florida.*

Relating to the Public

Public relations is much more than the flash, pizazz and hoopla typically associated with PR. Publicity and advertising are not sufficient alone to cultivate good relations between the public and the library. Public relations is the person-to-person effort to put libraries into the lives of the people. Good service to the public is the foundation for good PR. It is everybody's job! The trustees, director, staff, even the buildings and resources affect the public image of the library.

Trustees play a crucial role in public relations, as ambassadors of goodwill. Their involvement helps sustain the organization's credibility in the public eye. As the official representatives of the community, trustees are vital to the PR program of the library. Trustees have a group responsibility and an individual role in relating to the public.

Board Responsibility

- Establish public relations policy
- Develop a positive PR plan and schedule for the library
- Recognize PR as a total and continuous function of the library
- Assign members to participation in PR events
- Support staff training and involvement in PR program
- Evaluate the PR program and public service
- Allocate funds for PR activities and/or volunteer specialists to offer help

Individual Trustees

- Be vocal and visible
- Be well-informed, use the library and spread the word
- Listen to the community
- Attend meetings of community organizations to speak and gain information
- Convey the progress, plans and policies of the library to individuals and groups
- Ask the opinion-makers known by trustees if they will be library supporters
- Spot gaps in the library's information program and make suggestions
- Work closely with municipal and other officials
- Tell people what trustees do, who they are, when they meet and how they can be reached
- Sell the philosophy and merits of quality library service
- Learn about other libraries and services statewide and nationally
- Support Friends of the Library and recruit members

Do You Know Your Community?

Do you know:

- Which shelves in your library are always empty?
- Which journals are most used -- or lost?
- Who is not coming into your library?
- Who the local authors, artists, musicians, dancers are?
- What products are made in your community?
- What and how people celebrate?
- Who the decision makers are?

Listen to your friends, acquaintances, business associates.

- Drive home a different way
- Stop and see a friend you haven't seen for years
- Join a new organization
- Wear your library trustee hat everywhere
- Have fun being a trustee
- Support your library director
- Talk: be noisy about your library

How to write a news release:

- Know the cultural interests of the community
- Go to the editor for help
- Feature something special

How to plan a public relations campaign:

- Set objectives
- Know your target group
- Find out who will mail your library flyers with their routine mailing

How to tell the library story:

- Know the library story, read, talk to the local libraries, talk to other trustees
- Collect those interesting library anecdotes
- Learn to be comfortable speaking to groups

Know your community.

Collect:

Census figures about:

- economic levels
- family size
- ethnic backgrounds
- ages
- education
- occupations

The name of:

- persons who work with the community
  - organizations
  - schools
  - community businesses

Ideas you hear expressed

Problems raised

Issues discussed

Texas Library Trustees, published by the Texas State Library, 1979.

Elements for a Public Relations Checklist

Library Board

- Written PR policy statement
- Public relations representative/committee
- Funds PR annually
- Reviews PR plan: goals and objectives annually
- Actively involved in community
- Speakers Bureau

Director

- In larger libraries, delegates PR activities to staff member
- Meet regularly with PR staff
- Provides required information to PR staff
- Works with staff to develop annual PR plan and budget
- Reports PR efforts and results to board
- Plans staff training on Public Service and PR

Staff PR Specialist (larger libraries)

- Keeps director informed
- Attends board meetings
- Analyzes PR needs, plans PR and budget
- Evaluates PR regularly for board and director
- Assesses public attitudes toward library
- Rapport with media, community groups, writers, artists, business, other libraries
- Coordinate special activities with community groups
- Works closely with staff on PR projects
- Actively promotes the library on television , radio, in newspapers
- Maintains expertise in PR, communications, media

Staff

- Friendly service to all members of the public
- Attends appropriate training and continuing education events
- Interest, understanding, participation in overall PR program
- Interprets library policies, procedures and services to public
- Community awareness

Buildings

- Convenient, accessible locations
- Adequate outside signage
- Clear inside directional signs and labels
- Community bulletin boards
- Inviting atmosphere

Operations

- Printed items available to public
- Publications on library services and regulations
- Users informed of policies and plans
- Program calendar and posters
- Resource lists, bookmarks
- General newsletter to public
- Regular staff newsletter
- New staff, trustees and volunteers oriented to structure, goals and activities of library

Adapted from the Georgia Public Library Trustee Handbook 1984, published by the Georgia Library Trustee and Friends Association in cooperation with the Division of Library Services, Georgia Department of Education and Dekalb Library System.

Trustee Self-Assessment: Community Relations

	Yes	No
1. Our library board is representative of different groups in the community.	☐	☐
2. Our library has a written public relations policy.	☐	☐
3. I promote the library by talking to my friends about it.	☐	☐
4. Our library has a written public relations plan.	☐	☐
5. Our board tries to make the library responsive to community problems and trends.	☐	☐

Where to Get Help

Idaho State Library (Main Office)
325 W. State Street
Boise, ID 83702-6072
(208) 334-2153
(800) 458-3271
Fax (208) 334-4016
E-mail: pbradsha@isl.state.id.us

Idaho State Library
Eastern Field Office
PO Box 50919
Idaho Falls, ID 83405
(208) 525-7211
(800) 548-6212
Fax (208) 525-7255
E-mail: fnelson@isl.state.id.us

Idaho State Library
Northern Field Office
2201 N. Government Way
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
(208) 666-6704
(800) 330-7070
Fax (208) 664-5012
E-mail: lpladera@isl.state.id.us

Idaho Library Association
Box 8533
Moscow, ID 83843-8533

American Library Association
50 E. Huron
Chicago, IL 60611
(800) 545-2433
Fax (312) 280-5029

Appendix B

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948;
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
by the ALA Council.

Appendix C

Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Appendix C

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by: American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers

Challenged Materials

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form which reflects the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, and which is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states in Article I that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article II, that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of this procedure.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981;
amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Diversity in Collection Development

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other topics of a potentially controversial nature.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities.

Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs.

Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS: "Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community which the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs and interests of all persons in the community which the library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

Adopted July 14, 1982; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Appendix F

Economic Barriers to Information Access

An interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry. The First Amendment mandates the right of all persons to free expression, and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the ommunity the library serves. While the roles, goals and objectives of publicly supported libraries may differ, they share this common mission.

The library's essential mission must remain the first consideration for librarians and governing bodies faced with economic pressures and competition for funding.

In support of this mission, the American Library Association has enumerated certain principles of library services in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING FINES, FEES AND USER CHARGES

Article I of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves."

Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The American Library Association opposes the charging of user fees for the provision of information by all libraries and information services that receive their major support from public funds. All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally and equitably accessible to all library users.

Libraries that adhere to these principles systematically monitor their programs of service for potential barriers to access and strive to eliminate such barriers when they occur. All library policies and procedures, particularly those involving fines, fees, or other user charges, should be scrutinized for potential barriers to access. All services should be designed and implemented with care, so as not to infringe on or interfere with the provision or delivery of information and resources for all users. Services should be re-evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the library's basic mission remains uncompromised.

Librarians and governing bodies should look for alternative models and methods of library administration that minimize distinctions among users based on their economic status or financial condition. They should resist the temptation to impose user fees to alleviate financial pressures, at long term cost to institutional integrity and public confidence in libraries.

Library services that involve the provision of information, regardless of format, technology, or method of delivery, should be made available to all library users on an equal and equitable basis. Charging fees for the use of library collections, services, programs, or facilities that were purchased with public funds raises barriers to access. Such fees effectively abridge or deny access for some members of the community because they reinforce distinctions among users based on their ability and willingness to pay.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Article II of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."

Article III of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

Article IV of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas."

The American Library Association opposes any legislative or regulatory attempt to impose content restrictions on library resources, or to limit user access to information, as a condition of funding for publicly supported libraries and information services.

The First Amendment guarantee of freedom of expression is violated when the right to receive that expression is subject to arbitrary restrictions based on content.

Librarians and governing bodies should examine carefully any terms or conditions attached to library funding and should oppose attempts to limit through such conditions full and equal access to information because of content. This principle applies equally to private gifts or bequests and to public funds. In particular, librarians and governing bodies have an obligation to reject such restrictions when the effect of the restriction is to limit equal and equitable access to information.

Appendix F

Librarians and governing bodies should cooperate with all efforts to create a community consensus that publicly supported libraries require funding unfettered by restrictions. Such a consensus supports the library mission to provide the free and unrestricted exchange of information and ideas necessary to a functioning democracy.

The Association's historic position in this regard is stated clearly in a number of Association policies: 50.4 Free Access to Information, 50.9 Financing of Libraries, 51.2 Equal Access to Library Service, 51.3 Intellectual Freedom, 53 Intellectual Freedom Policies, 59.1 Policy Objectives, and 60 Library Services for the Poor.

Adopted by the ALA Council, June 30, 1993.

Access for Children and Young People to Video Tapes and other Nonprint Formats

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Library collections of videotapes, motion pictures, and other nonprint formats raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people have access to materials and services that reflect diversity sufficient to meet their needs.

To guide librarians and others in resolving these issues, the American Library Association provides the following guidelines.

Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS says, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

ALA's FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS: An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states:

The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

. . .[P]arents - and only parents - have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children - and only their children - to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Policies which set minimum age limits for access to videotapes and/or other audiovisual materials and equipment, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Further, age limits based on the cost of the materials are unacceptable. Unless directly and specifically prohibited by law from circulating certain motion pictures and video productions to minors, librarians should apply the same standards to circulation of these materials as are applied to books and other materials.

Recognizing that libraries cannot act in loco parentis, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing.

Published reviews of films and videotapes and/or reference works which provide information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences can be made available in conjunction with nonprint collections to assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship. This material may include information provided by video producers and distributors, promotional material on videotape packaging, and Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) ratings if they are included on the tape or in the packaging by the original publisher and/or if they appear in review sources or reference works included in the library's collection. Marking out or removing ratings information from videotape packages constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing*. For the library to add such ratings to the materials if they are not already there, to post a list of such ratings with a collection, or to attempt to enforce such ratings through circulation policies or other procedures constitutes labeling, "an attempt to prejudice attitudes" about the material, and is unacceptable. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

*For information on case law, please contact the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom.

See also: STATEMENT ON LABELING and EXPURGATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS, Interpretations of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

Adopted June 28, 1989, by the ALA Council; the quotation from FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS was changed after Council adopted the July 3, 1991, revision of that Interpretation.

Restricted Access to Library Materials

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Attempts to restrict access to library materials violate the basic tenets of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

Historically, attempts have been made to limit access by relegating materials into segregated collections. These attempts are in violation of established policy. Such collections are often referred to by a variety of names, including "closed shelf," "locked case," "adults only," "restricted shelf," or "high demand." Access to some materials also may require a monetary fee or financial deposit. In any situation which restricts access to certain materials, a barrier is placed between the patron and those materials. That barrier may be age related, linguistic, economic, or psychological in nature.

Because materials placed in restricted collections often deal with controversial, unusual, or "sensitive" subjects, having to ask a librarian or circulation clerk for them may be embarrassing or inhibiting for patrons desiring the materials. Needing to ask for materials may pose a language barrier or a staff service barrier. Because restricted collections often are composed of materials which some library patrons consider "objectionable," the potential user may be predisposed to think of the materials as "objectionable" and, therefore, are reluctant to ask for them.

Barriers between the materials and the patron which are psychological, or are affected by language skills, are nonetheless limitations on access to information. Even when a title is listed in the catalog with a reference to its restricted status, a barrier is placed between the patron and the publication (see also "Statement on Labeling"). There may be, however, countervailing factors to establish policies to protect library materials—specifically, for reasons of physical preservation including protection from theft or mutilation. Any such policies must be carefully formulated and administered with extreme attention to the principles of intellectual freedom. This caution is also in keeping with ALA policies, such as "Evaluating Library Collections," "Free Access to Libraries for Minors," and the "Preservation Policy."

Finally, in keeping with the "Joint Statement on Access" of the American Library Association and Society of American Archivists, restrictions that result from donor agreements or contracts for special collections materials must be similarly circumscribed. Permanent exclusions are not acceptable. The overriding impetus must be to work for free and unfettered access to all documentary heritage.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, by the ALA Council.

Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

[draft]

The world is in the midst of an electronic communications revolution. Based on its constitutional, ethical, and historical heritage, American librarianship is uniquely positioned to address the broad range of information issues being raised in this revolution. In particular, librarians address intellectual freedom from a strong ethical base and an abiding commitment to the preservation of the individual's rights.

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the right to freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. Such rights extend to minors as well as adults. Libraries and librarians facilitate the exercise of these rights by providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of format or technology.

The American Library Association expresses the basic principles of librarianship in its CODE OF ETHICS and in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and its Interpretations. These serve to guide professional librarians and library governing bodies in addressing issues of intellectual freedom and the rights of the people they serve.

Issues arising from the still-developing technology of computer-mediated information need to be approached and regularly reviewed from a context of constitutional principles and established policy so that fundamental and traditional tenets of librarianship are not swept away.

It is the nature of electronic information that it flows freely across boundaries and barriers despite attempts by individuals, governments, and private entities to channel or control it. Even so, many people, for reasons of technology, infrastructure, or economic status do not have access to electronic information.

In making decisions on how to offer access to electronic information, each library should consider its mission, goals, objectives, and cooperative agreements, and the needs of all the people it serves. Such considerations will address the rights of users, the equity of access, and information resources and access issues.

Appendix I

THE RIGHTS OF USERS

All library system and network policies, procedures or regulations relating to electronic resources and services should be scrutinized for potential violation of user rights.

User policies should be developed according to the policies and guidelines established by the American Library Association, including GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

Users have the right to be free of interference and unreasonable limitations or conditions set by libraries, librarians, system administrators, vendors, network service providers, or others. This specifically includes contracts, agreements, and licenses entered into by libraries on behalf of their users.

No user should be restricted or denied access for expressing or receiving constitutionally protected speech. No user's access should be changed without due process, including, but not limited to, notice and a means of appeal.

Although electronic systems may include distinct property rights and security concerns, such elements may not be employed as a subterfuge to deny users' access to information. Users have a right to information, training and assistance necessary to operate hardware and software provided by the library.

Users have the right of confidentiality in all of their activities with electronic resources and services provided by the library, and the library shall ensure that this confidentiality is maintained. The library also should support, by policy, procedure, and practice, the user's right to privacy; however, users should be advised that because security is technically difficult to achieve, electronic communications and files could become public.

The rights of users who are minors shall in no way be abridged.(See FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARIES FOR MINORS: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS; ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM;and ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO VIDEOTAPES AND OTHER NONPRINT FORMATS.)

Appendix I

EQUITY OF ACCESS

Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users. Once the decision is made to provide access to electronic information, the user must not be required to pay to obtain the information or use the service. When resources are insufficient to meet demand, rationing service may be necessary to provide equitable access. All library policies should be scrutinized in light of ECONOMIC BARRIERS TO INFORMATION ACCESS: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS, SERVICES AN FACILITIES.

INFORMATION RESOURCES AND ACCESS ISSUES

Electronic resources provide unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Libraries and librarians should provide material and information presenting all points of view. This pertains to electronic resources, no less than it does to the more traditional sources of information in libraries. (See DIVERSITY IN COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS)

Libraries and librarians should not deny or limit access to information available via electronic resources because of its allegedly controversial content or because of the librarian's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation. Information retrieved or utilized electronically should be considered constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court with appropriate jurisdiction.

Providing access to electronic information, services, and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing material for a library collection. Libraries may discover that some information accessed electronically may not meet a library's selection or collection development policy. It is, therefore, left to each user to determine what is appropriate. Parents who are concerned about their children's use of electronic resources should provide guidance to their own children.

Just as libraries do not endorse the viewpoints or vouch for the accuracy or authenticity of traditional materials in the collection, they do not do so for electronic information. Libraries must support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of all users regardless of the user's age or the content of material. Libraries and librarians should not deny access to information on the grounds that it is perceived to be frivolous or lacking value.

Libraries have a particular obligation to provide access to government publications available only in electronic format. n order to prevent the loss of information, libraries may need to expand their selection or collection development policies to ensure preservation, in appropriate formats, of information obtained electronically.

Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records*

The Council of the American Library Association strongly recommends that the responsible officers of each library, cooperative system, and consortium in the United States:

1. Formally adopt a policy which specifically recognizes its circulation records and other records identifying the names of library users to be confidential in nature.

2. Advise all librarians and library employees that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government except pursuant to such process, order or subpoena as may be authorize under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power.

3. Resist the issuance of enforcement of any such process, order, or subpoena until such time as a proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.**

*Note: See also ALA POLICY MANUAL 54.16 - CODE OF ETHICS, point #3, "Librarians must protect each user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired."

**Note: Point 3, above, means that upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, the library's officers will consult with their legal counsel to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in proper form and if there is a showing of good cause of its issuance; if the process, order, or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, they will insist that such defects be cured.

Adopted January 20, 1971; revised July 4, 1975, July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council.

Appendix J

Suggested procedures for implementing policy on confidentiality of library records

When drafting local policies, libraries should consult with their legal counsel to insure these policies are based upon and consistent with applicable federal, state, and local law concerning the confidentiality of library records, the disclosure of public records, and the protection of individual privacy.

Suggested procedures include the following:

1. The library staff member receiving the request to examine or obtain information relating to circulation or other records identifying the names of library users, will immediately refer the person making the request to the responsible officer of the institution, who shall explain the confidentiality policy.

2. The director, upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, shall consult with the appropriate legal officer assigned to the institution to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in good form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance.

3. If the process, order, or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, insistence shall be made that such defects be cured before any records are released. (The legal process requiring the production of circulation or other library records shall ordinarily be in the form of subpoena "duces tecum" [bring your records] requiring the responsible officer to attend court or the taking of his/her deposition and may require him/her to bring along certain designated circulation or other specified records.)

4. Any threats or unauthorized demands (i.e., those not supported by a process, order, or subpoena) concerning circulation and other records identifying the names of library users shall be reported to the appropriate legal officer of the institution.

5. Any problems relating to the privacy of circulation and other records identifying the names of library users which are not provided for above shall be referred to the responsible officer.

Adopted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, January 9, 1983; revised January 11, 1988

Statement Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information About Library Users

The ethical responsibilities of librarians, and statutes in 44 states and the District of Columbia, protect the privacy of library users. Confidentiality extends to "information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed or acquired," and includes database search records, reference interviews, interlibrary loan records and all other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities or services.

The First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech and of the press requires that the corresponding rights to hear what is spoken and read what is written be preserved, free from fear of government intrusion, intimidation or reprisal. Confidentiality is essential to protect the exercise of these rights from governmental invasions of privacy.

Libraries are impartial resources providing information on all points of view, available to all persons regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, social or political views, economic status, or any other characteristic. The role of libraries as such resources must not be compromised by an erosion of the privacy rights of library patrons.

The American Library Association has received several reports of visits by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to libraries, where agents allegedly have asked for personally identifiable information about library patrons. These visits, whether within the so-called "Library Awareness Program" or not, reflect an insensitivity to the role confidentiality plays in the preservation of First Amendment rights, rights which extend also to foreign nationals while in the United States. The Bureau's interest in library records reflects a dangerous and fallacious equation of what a person reads with what that person believes or how that person is likely to behave. This presumption is a threat to the freedom to read. It is also a threat to a crucial aspect of First Amendment rights: that freedom of speech and of the press include the freedom to hold, disseminate and receive unpopular, minority, "extreme" or even "dangerous" ideas.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee recognizes that under limited circumstances, access to certain information might be restricted due to a legitimate "national security" concern. However, there has been no showing of a plausible probability that national security will be compromised by the uses foreign nationals make of the unclassified information available in libraries. The Intellectual Freedom Committee also recognizes that law enforcement agencies and officers may occasionally believe that library records contain information which would be helpful to the investigation of criminal activity. If there is a reasonable basis to believe such records are necessary to the progress of an investigation or prosecution, our judicial system provides the mechanism for seeking release of such confidential records: the issuance of a court order, following a showing of good cause based on specific facts, by a court of competent jurisdiction.

January 10, 1989

Evaluating Library Collections

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The continuous review of library materials is necessary as a means of maintaining an active library collection of current interest to users. In the process, materials may be added and physically deteriorated or obsolete materials may be replaced or removed in accordance with the collection maintenance policy of a given library and the needs of the community it serves. Continued evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of libraries and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or disapproved of by segments of the community. Such abuse of the evaluation function violates the principles of intellectual freedom and is in opposition to the Preamble and Articles 1 and 2 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which state:

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

The American Library Association opposes such "silent censorship" and strongly urges that libraries adopt guidelines setting forth the positive purposes and principles of evaluation of materials in library collections.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981, by the ALA Council.

Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Libraries often provide exhibit spaces and bulletin boards. The uses made of these spaces should conform to the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS: Article I states, "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation." Article II states, "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Article VI maintains that exhibit space should be made available "on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use."

In developing library exhibits, staff members should endeavor to present a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints. Libraries should not shrink from developing exhibits because of controversial content or because of the beliefs or affiliations of those whose work is represented. Just as libraries do not endorse the viewpoints of those whose works are represented in their collections, libraries also do not endorse the beliefs or viewpoints of topics which may be the subject of library exhibits.

Exhibit areas often are made available for use by community groups. Libraries should formulate a written policy for the use of these exhibit areas to assure that space is provided on an equitable basis to all groups which request it.

Written policies for exhibit space use should be stated in inclusive rather than exclusive terms. For example, a policy that the library's exhibit space is open "to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, or charitable activities" is an inclusive statement of the limited uses of the exhibit space. This defined limitation would permit religious groups to use the exhibit space because they engage in intellectual activities, but would exclude most commercial uses of the exhibit space.

A publicly supported library may limit use of its exhibit space to strictly "library-related" activities, provided that the limitation is clearly circumscribed and is viewpoint neutral.

Libraries may include in this policy rules regarding the time, place, and manner of use of the exhibit space, so long as the rules are content-neutral and are applied in the same manner to all groups wishing to use the space. A library may wish to limit access to exhibit space to groups within the community served by the library. This practice is acceptable provided that the same rules and regulations apply to everyone, and that exclusion is not made on the basis of the doctrinal, religious, or political beliefs of the potential users.

The library should not censor or remove an exhibit because some members of the community may disagree with its content. Those who object to the content of any exhibit held at the library shoul be able to submit their complaint and/or their own exhibit proposal to be judged according to the policies established by the library.

Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the exhibit area stating that the library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of exhibits or exhibitors.

Libraries which make bulletin boards available to public groups for posting notices of public interest should develop criteria for the use of these spaces based on the same considerations as those outlined above. Libraries may wish to develop criteria regarding the size of material to be displayed, the length of time materials may remain on the bulletin board, the frequency with which material may be posted for the same group, and the geographic area from which notices will be accepted.

Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council.

Expurgation of Library Materials

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Expurgating library materials is a violation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other library resources by the library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, which state that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval," and that "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all library users, by limiting access to ideas and information.

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

Adopted February 2, 1973; amended July 1, 1981; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Free Access to Libraries for Minors

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Library policies and procedures which effectively deny minors equal access to all library resources available to other users violate the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities which fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, level of education, or legal emancipation.

The selection and development of library resources should not be diluted because of minors having the same access to library resources as adult users. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Librarians and governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions on access to library resources in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections from parents or anyone else. The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries do not authorize librarians or governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents or legal guardians. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents - and only parents - have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children - and only their children - to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials or facilities, should so advise their children. Librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library users.

Librarians have a professional commitment to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free and equal access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Adopted June 30, 1972; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991, by the ALA Council.

Statement on Labeling

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and/or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:

1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor's tool.
2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.
3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library's jurisdiction, the library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to material or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings — if placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder — could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.

Adopted July 13, 1951. Amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Library Initiated Programs as a Resource

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Library initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education and recreation. Article 1 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves."

Library initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the library and to the library's primary function as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Library initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library initiated programs across language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise unserved populations to the resources of the library and provide access to information.

Library initiated programs "should not be proscribed or removed (or canceled) because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval" of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article 2 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of material for the library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library initiated programs are a library resource, and as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the library's policy-making body. These guidelines include an endorsement of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and set forth the library's commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Appendix Q

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library initiated program are handled according to the same written policy and procedures which govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article 5 of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states: "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The "right to use a library" encompasses all of the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library initiated programs. Libraries do not deny or abridge access to library resources, including library initiated programs, based on an individual's economic background and ability to pay.

Adopted January 27, 1982. Amended June 26, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Meeting Rooms

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Many libraries provide meeting rooms for individuals and groups as part of a program of service. Article VI of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states that such facilities should be made available to the public served by the given library "on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use."

Libraries maintaining meeting room facilities should develop and publish policy statements governing use. These statements can properly define time, place, or manner of use; such qualifications should not pertain to the content of a meeting or to the beliefs or affiliations of the sponsors. These statements should be made available in any commonly used language within the community served.

If meeting rooms in libraries supported by public funds are made available to the general public for non-library sponsored events, the library may not exclude any group based on the subject matter to be discussed or based on the ideas that the group advocates. For example, if a library allows charities and sports clubs to discuss their activities in library meeting rooms, then the library should not exclude partisan political or religious groups from discussing their activities in the same facilities. If a library opens its meeting rooms to a wide variety of civic organizations, then the library may not deny access to a religious organization. Libraries may wish to post a permanent notice near the meeting room stating that the library does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of meetings or meeting room users.

Written policies for meeting room use should be stated in inclusive rather than exclusive terms. For example, a policy that the library's facilities are open "to organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, or charitable activities" is an inclusive statement of the limited uses to which the facilities may be put. This defined limitation would permit religious groups to use the facilities because they engage in intellectual activities, but would exclude most commercial uses of the facility.

A publicly supported library may limit use of its meeting rooms to strictly "library-related" activities, provided that the limitation is clearly circumscribed and is viewpoint neutral.

Written policies may include limitations on frequency of use, and whether or not meetings held in library meeting rooms must be open to the public. If state and local laws permit private as well as public sessions of meetings in libraries, libraries may choose to offer both options. The same standard should be applicable to all.

If meetings are open to the public, libraries should include in their meeting room policy statement a section which addresses admission fees. If admission fees are permitted, libraries shall seek to make it possible that these fees do not limit access to individuals who may be unable to pay, but who wish to attend the meeting. Article V of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS states that "a person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." It is inconsistent with Article V to restrict indirectly access to library meeting rooms based on an individual's or group's ability to pay for that access.

Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council.

Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage

Introduction

Libraries are faced with problems of user behavior that must be addressed to insure the effective delivery of service and full access to facilities. Library governing bodies must approach the regulation of user behavior within the framework of the ALA Code of Professional Ethics, the Library Bill of Rights and the law, including local and state statutes, constitutional standards under the First and Fourteenth Amendments, due process and equal treatment under the law.

Publicly supported library service is based upon the First Amendment right of free expression. Publicly supported libraries are recognized as limited public forums for access to information. At least one federal court of appeals has recognized a First Amendment right to receive information in a public library. Library policies and procedures that could impinge upon such rights are subject to a higher standard of review than may be required in the policies of other public services and facilities.

There is a significant government interest in maintaining a library environment that is conducive to all users' exercise of their constitutionally protected right to receive information. This significant interest authorizes publicly supported libraries to maintain a safe and healthy environment in which library users and staff can be free from harassment, intimidation, and threats to their safety and well-being. Libraries should provide appropriate safeguards against such behavior and enforce policies and procedures addressing that behavior when it occurs.

In order to protect all library users' right of access to library facilities, to ensure the safety of users and staff, and to protect library resources and facilities from damage, the library's governing authority may impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place, or manner of library access.

Guidelines

The American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee recommends that publicly supported libraries use the following guidelines, based upon constitutional principles, to develop policies and procedures governing the use of library facilities:

1. Libraries are advised to rely upon existing legislation and law enforcement mechanisms as the primary means of controlling behavior that involves public safety, criminal behavior, or other issues covered by existing local, state, or federal statutes. In many instances, this legal framework may be sufficient to provide the library with the necessary tools to maintain order.

2. If the library's governing body chooses to write its own policies and procedures regarding user behavior or access to library facilities, services, and resources, the policies should cite statutes or ordinances upon which the authority to make those policies is based.

3. Library policies and procedures governing the use of library facilities should be carefully examined to insure that they are not in violation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS.

4. Reasonable and narrowly drawn policies and procedures designed to prohibit interference with use of the facilities and services by others, or to prohibit activities inconsistent with achievement of substantial library objectives, are acceptable.

5. Such policies and the attendant implementing procedures should be reviewed regularly by the library's legal counsel for compliance with federal and state constitutional requirements, federal and state civil rights legislation, all other applicable federal and state legislation, and applicable case law.

6. Every effort should be made to respond to potentially difficult circumstances of user behavior in a timely, direct, and open manner. Common sense, reason and sensitivity should be used to resolve issues in a constructive and positive manner without escalation.

7. Libraries should develop an ongoing staff training program based upon their user behavior policy. This program should include training to develop empathy and understanding of the social and economic problems of some library users.

8. Policies and regulations that impose restrictions on library access:

   a. should apply only to those activities that materially interfere with the public's right of access to library facilities, the safety of users and staff, and the protection of library resources and facilities;

   b. should narrowly tailor prohibitions or restrictions so that they are not more restrictive than needed to serve their objectives;

   c. should attempt to balance competing interests and avoid favoring the majority at the expense of individual rights, or allowing individual users' rights to supersede those of the majority of library users;

d. should be based upon actual behavior and not upon arbitrary distinctions between individuals or classes of individuals. Policies should not target specific users or groups of users based upon an assumption or expectation that such users might engage in behaviors that could disrupt library service;

e. should not restrict access to the library by persons who merely inspire the anger or annoyance of others. Policies based upon appearance or behavior that is merely annoying or which merely generates negative subjective reactions from others, do not meet the necessary standard unless the behavior would interfere with access by an objectively reasonable person to library facilities and services. Such policies should employ a reasonable, objective standard based on the behavior itself;

f. must provide a clear description of the behavior that is prohibited so that a reasonably intelligent person will have fair warning and must be continuously and clearly communicated in an effective manner to all library users;

g. to the extent possible, should not leave those affected without adequate alternative means of access to information in the library;

h. must be enforced evenhandedly, and not in a manner intended to benefit or disfavor any person or group in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

The user behaviors addressed in these guidelines are the result of a wide variety of individual and societal conditions. Libraries should take advantage of the expertise of local social service agencies, advocacy groups, mental health professionals, law enforcement officials, and other community resources to develop community strategies for addressing the needs of a diverse population.

Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services and Facilities

INTRODUCTION

Publicly supported libraries exist within the context of a body of law derived from the United States Constitution and appropriate state constitutions, defined by statute, and implemented by regulations, policies and procedures established by their governing bodies and administrations. These regulations, policies and procedures establish the mission of the library, define its functions, services and operations and ascertain the rights and responsibilities of the clientele served by the library.

Publicly supported library service is based upon the First Amendment right of free expression. The publicly supported library provides free and equal access to information for all people of the community it serves. Thus, publicly supported libraries are governmental agencies designated as limited public forums for access to information. Libraries that make meeting rooms, exhibit spaces and/or bulletin boards available for public use are also designated as limited public forums for the exchange of information.

Many libraries adopt administrative policies and procedures regulating the organization and use of library materials, services and facilities. These policies and procedures affect access and may have the effect of restricting, denying or creating barriers to access to the library as a public forum, including the library's resources, facilities and services. Library policies and procedures that impinge upon First Amendment rights are subject to a higher standard of review than may be required in the policies of other public services and facilities.

Policies, procedures or regulations that may result in denying, restricting or creating physical or economic barriers to access to the library's public forum must be based on a compelling government interest. However, library governing authorities may place reasonable and narrowly drawn restrictions on the time, place or manner of access to library resources, services or facilities, provided that such restrictions are not based upon arbitrary distinctions between individuals or classes of individuals.

The American Library Association has adopted the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and Interpretations of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS to provide library governing authorities, librarians and other library staff and library users with guidelines on how constitutional principles apply to libraries in the United States of America.

Appendix T

The American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee recommends that publicly supported libraries use the following guidelines, based on constitutional principles, to develop policies, regulations and procedures.

GUIDELINES
All library policies, regulations and procedures should be carefully examined to determine if they may result in denying, restricting or creating barriers to access. If they may result in such restrictions, they:

1. should be developed and implemented within the legal framework that applies to the library. This includes: the United States Constitution, including the First and Fourteenth Amendments, due process and equal treatment under the law; the applicable state constitution; federal and state civil rights legislation; all other applicable federal, state and local legislation; and applicable case law;

2. should cite statutes or ordinances upon which the authority to make that policy is based, when appropriate;

3. should be developed and implemented within the framework of the Library Bill of Rights and its Interpretations;

4. should be based upon the library's mission and objectives;

5. should only impose restrictions on the access to, or use of library resources, services or facilities when those restrictions are necessary to achieve the library's mission and objectives;

6. should narrowly tailor prohibitions or restrictions, in the rare instances when they are required, so they are not more restrictive than needed to serve their objectives;

7. should attempt to balance competing interests and avoid favoring the majority at the expense of individual rights, or allowing individual users' rights to interfere materially with the majority's rights to free and equal access to library resources, services and facilities;

8. should avoid arbitrary distinctions between individuals or classes of users, and should not have the effect of denying or abridging a person's right to use library resources, services or facilities based upon arbitrary distinctions such as origin, age, background or views;

In the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and all of its Interpretations, it is intended that: "origin" encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in the circumstances of their birth; "age" encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in their levels of development and maturity; "background" encompasses all the characteristics of individuals that are a result of their life experiences; and "views" encompasses all the opinions and beliefs held and expressed by individuals;

9. should not target specific users or groups of users based upon an assumption or expectation that such users might engage in behavior that will materially interfere with the achievement of substantial library objectives;

10. must be clearly stated so that a reasonably intelligent person will have fair warning of what is expected;

11. must provide a means of appeal;

12. must be reviewed regularly by the library's governing authority and by its legal counsel.

13. must be communicated clearly and made available in an effective manner to all library users;

14. must be enforced evenhandedly, and not in a manner intended to benefit or disfavor any person or group in an arbitrary or capricious manner;

Libraries should develop an ongoing staff training program designed to foster the understanding of the legal framework and principles underlying library policies and to assist staff in gaining the skill and ability to respond to potentially difficult circumstances in a timely, direct and open manner. This program should include training to develop empathy and understanding of the social and economic problems of some library users;

15. should, if reasonably possible, provide adequate alternative means of access to information for those whose behavior results in the denial or restriction of access to any library resource, service or facility.

Adopted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, June 28, 1994

Appendix U

The Universal Right to Free Expression

An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association, and the corollary right to receive information.

The American Library Association endorses this principle, which is also set forth in the UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Preamble of this document states that ". . . recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. . ." and ". . . the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people. . . ."

Article 18 of this document states:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19 states:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.

Article 20 states:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

We affirm our belief that these are inalienable rights of every person, regardless of origin, age, background, or views. We embody our professional commitment to these principles in the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS and CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, as adopted by the American Library Association.

We maintain that these are universal principles and should be applied by libraries and librarians throughout the world. The American Library

Association's policy on International Relations reflects these objectives: ". . . to encourage the exchange, dissemination, and access to information and the unrestricted flow of library materials in all formats throughout the world."

We know that censorship, ignorance, and limitations on the free flow of information are the tools of tyranny and oppression. We believe that ideas and information topple the walls of hate and fear and build bridges of cooperation and understanding far more effectively than weapons and armies.

The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights and intellectual freedom; the two are inseparably linked and inextricably entwined. Freedom of opinion and expression is not derived from or dependent on any form of government or political power. This right is inherent in every individual. It cannot be surrendered, nor can it be denied. True justice comes from the exercise of this right.

We recognize the power of information and ideas to inspire justice, to restore freedom and dignity to the oppressed, and to change the hearts and minds of the oppressors.

Courageous men and women, in difficult and dangerous circumstances throughout human history, have demonstrated that freedom lives in the human heart and cries out for justice even in the face of threats, enslavement, imprisonment, torture, exile, and death. We draw inspiration from their example. They challenge us to remain steadfast in our most basic professional responsibility to promote and defend the right of free expression.

There is no good censorship. Any effort to restrict free expression and the free flow of information aids the oppressor. Fighting oppression with censorship is self-defeating.

Threats to the freedom of expression of any person anywhere are threats to the freedom of all people everywhere. Violations of human rights and the right of free expression have been recorded in virtually every country and society across the globe.

In response to these violations, we affirm these principles:

- The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental prerogative that leads to the intimidation of individuals which prevents them from exercising their rights to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. We urge libraries and librarians everywhere to resist such abuse of governmental power, and to support those against whom such governmental power has been employed.

Appendix U

- The American Library Association condemns any governmental effort to involve libraries and librarians in restrictions on the right of any individual to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas. Such restrictions pervert the function of the library and violate the professional responsibilities of librarians.

- The American Library Association rejects censorship in any form. Any action which denies the inalienable human rights of individuals only damages the will to resist oppression, strengthens the hand of the oppressor, and undermines the cause of justice.

- The American Library Association will not abrogate these principles. We believe that censorship corrupts the cause of justice, and contributes to the demise of freedom.

Adopted by the ALA Council, January 16, 1991